

'Underclass' fear

Disability campaigners have condemned a government decision to let insurance companies use the results of a genetic test for Huntington's disease.

The Genetics and Insurance Committee ruled in October that a test determining a person's likelihood of developing Huntington's disease is reliable enough for life insurance companies to use its results. If they have taken the test, people with a family history of Huntington's must now reveal the results when applying for life insurance and may be refused cover.

Campaigners say the decision will create a class of people unable to get mortgages and other services. It could also stop people taking a test and getting early treatment.

Harry Cayton, chief executive of the Alzheimer's Society, said: "We disagree in principle with what is, in effect, genetic cleansing. We are the only country in Europe, probably in the world, to be heading down this road. It's giving the insurance companies the power to

create a genetic underclass."

Tom Shakespeare of the Centre for Life told DN: "It is discriminatory and should be covered by the Disability Discrimination Act. They've decided it's too costly to cover this group of people so they are going to try and exclude them."

Insurers are now to submit similar applications for six other conditions, including a form of Alzheimer's disease.

A spokesperson for the Association of British Insurers said: "All insurance indulges in differential and preferential measures. The greater the risk, the greater the premium, or an insurer may choose not to take that risk. If a person knows the results of a genetic test and his insurance company doesn't, he has unfair advantage."

Bert Massie, chairman of the Disability Rights Commission, said: "Insurance has always

been based on discriminatory principles. For many years disabled motorists had to pay higher premiums. If they have evidence there's increased risk then it's not discrimination.

"But it is a slippery slope. What is next? You have to get a test or they won't insure you? It would be discrimination if they imposed an extra premium on disabled people without any evidence that they pose a greater risk."

Agnes Fletcher, head of communications at RADAR, said: "Excluding people from services is not the answer. It is the insurance industry's business to make money. But for the Government, which regulates these things, there are wider concerns."

• In the US President Clinton banned the use of genetic testing on Federal employees in February because it could discriminate against them.



Have a care: Ruby Jere, who has a learning disability, and mum Vivienne helped celebrate Share the Care week at the Millennium Dome, London, in September. The event was organised by the Shared Care Network, which encourages people to volunteer as short-break carers for disabled children. Tel: 0117 928 9814.

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Enham to RADAR's rescue

The disability charity RADAR has been saved after it agreed a merger with the little-known Enham Trust.

The new charity will provide services for disabled people and also campaign for their rights. The Enham Trust is now looking to merge with a third "well-known" charity to make the organisation more influential.

RADAR, with 547 member groups and 24 staff, had sought a merger to avoid closure after being thrown into a financial crisis (DN, September).

The Enham Trust, based in Hampshire, has a turnover of £4.9m and assets of £7.5m. It provides training, employment and accommodation for around 400 disabled people a year.

The new organisation will be set up by April next year after management consultants have looked at the group.

Peter Mansell, chief executive of RADAR, said: "I am sure the organisation will now

grow and prosper. It is great for disabled people. I am over the moon."

Ann MacFadyan (below), director of development at the Enham Trust, said: "We are looking at the creation of a group and are interested in a structure that will allow us to



strengthen the impact of this new national body. We are in the very early stages of negotiating with another charity."

Questions have continued to be asked about the way in which RADAR's former chief executive Bert Massie handled the charity's financial difficulties before leaving to become

chairman of the Disability Rights Commission (DRC).

Massie denied to DN that he had set fundraising budgets too high, and rejected suggestions that he had not been sufficiently focused on RADAR's problems last year during negotiations for his DRC contract, which took several months.

He said: "People may make that allegation. It is simply opinion."

Neil Betteridge, former head of public affairs at RADAR and now head of public policy and campaigning at Arthritis Care, said the Government should take some responsibility for RADAR's increased problems because of its failure to negotiate more quickly when "cherry picking" Massie.

He said: "Failure to do that can mean that an organisation is labouring under intense uncertainty for much longer than necessary, and that can have a terribly damaging effect."

DRC takes school to court

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) is taking a Lancashire school to court for banning a boy with diabetes from going on school trips.

Tom White, 15, was barred from trips with Clitheroe Royal Grammar School after having a hypoglycaemic attack on a skiing break in February. It was his

first ever blackout, but he is now banned from all sports and language trips.

This is the first court case against a school under the goods and services section of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). Education is currently exempt from the DDA, but the DRC believes school

trips are covered as non-educational activities.

Bert Massie, chair of the DRC, said: "There is no justification for this. A disabled pupil should have access to the same opportunities as everyone else."

• A national poster campaign promoting DDA awareness has been launched by the

Department for Education and Employment. The posters show service providers like publicans and shopkeepers how they can comply with the DDA and that small changes can make their services accessible to disabled customers. They feature the phrase "What have you got to offer?"

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DisabilityNOW

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Groups in dispute

The disabled people's movement is in open conflict after a row between senior figures.

There is also speculation that tensions contributed to the resignation of Richard Wood, long-time chief executive of the British Council of Disabled People (BCODP), in September.

The row blew up after Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People (GMCDP)'s magazine *Coalition* carried two articles by Steve Jones, formerly a member of Disability Action North East, and Anne Rae, former BCODP chair.

The Jones article accused unnamed figures in BCODP of collaborating with moves towards genetic screening,

while the Rae article accused some of wanting to cosy up to the political establishment.

An open letter by BCODP chair Bob Williams-Findlay to BCODP members called for disciplinary action against GMCDP unless it apologised. But the Manchester group and others introduced a motion of censure against Williams-Findlay at the AGM in October, calling on him to apologise and accusing him of mismanagement. It was carried by ten votes to nine.

Richard Wood said he quit on health grounds and to set up a business consultancy.

DN understands that differences within the group go back

to at least February 1999 when Anne Rae resigned as chair.

Rae said: "The problem within BCODP is a lack of leadership and direction."

"Unless people are prepared to confront what is going on we could lose everything," Williams-Findlay told DN.

Dr Tom Shakespeare, head of the Policy and Ethics Research Institute at the International Centre for Life, said: "The disability movement is proving very effective at being sectarian, and the enemies of disabled people benefit."

• Brenda Bond has resigned as chief executive of the Spinal Injuries Association after less than a year in post.

Shake-up brings work worry

Disabled people may face new pressures to seek work, Education and Employment Secretary David Blunkett has said.

Speaking to the Policy Studies Institute in October, Mr Blunkett hinted that disabled people might face benefits penalties if they fail to look for work.

He said: "It is a something for something approach, in which people have an obligation to help themselves where they can."

At present the New Deal for Disabled People, which has its

national roll-out next year, is voluntary.

Blunkett also outlined other measures to get disabled people into work.

The All Work Test, for example, which assesses whether disabled people are incapable of work and should get Incapacity Benefit (IB), will be replaced by Personal Capability Assessments. These look at what disabled people can do and began in 12 areas covering 250,000 IB claimants in October.

Job retention and rehabilitation pilot schemes are to be

introduced next April in a bid to help people keep a job if they become disabled while in work.

Around 2.4 million people claim IB.

Richard Kramer, head of campaigns at Mencap, welcomed plans to help disabled people work if they could.

But he said: "The Government's emphasis on Welfare to Work should not leave people with a learning disability feeling stigmatised about receiving benefits or worried that their benefits are under threat."



Taxi! Jenny Hollingworth from Coventry tried to get a minicab to take her and her guide dog Neisha home from the supermarket as part of the GDBA campaign.

Councils' cab action

Over 60 local authorities have agreed to review their licensing laws to ensure that minicabs cannot refuse to carry guide dogs, following a campaign by Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDBA).

GDBA wrote to the authorities after receiving complaints that firms were refusing to take the dogs. The campaign was part of the Access to All campaign during Guide Dog Week in October.

More than 40 authorities confirmed it was already their policy to ensure guide dogs were carried, while a further 120 offered their support.

Geraldine Peacock, GDBA chief executive, said: "It is very clear that a small change in the licensing law will have a dra-

matic effect on the quality and freedom of life for many thousands of blind and partially sighted people."

London minicabs were licensed by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions but are now the responsibility of Transport for London. In some London boroughs four out of five minicabs refuse to take guide dogs, GDBA has discovered.

Bryan Heiser, chair of the London Accessible Transport Alliance and special adviser to Transport for London, welcomed the GDBA campaign.

"When minicab regulation comes in later this year we will take an extremely dim view of any attempt to discriminate against blind people," he said.

Holiday Care rewards achievement

The latest millennium award, from the charity Holiday Care, has gone to the general manager of Copthorne Tara Hotel in Kensington, London.

Des Kent was commended in October for "outstanding efforts to promote access for disabled people."


Holiday Care chief executive David Phillips said: "Des has overseen the complete refurbishment of the fully accessible rooms at the Tara and has made disability awareness an integral part of staff training."

Valerie Wenham, adviser for

disabled visitors at the National Trust (NT), won an award for her 30 years' work. She has transformed facilities for disabled visitors, making NT the leading provider in the heritage sector, said David Phillips. "She has achieved this by showing vision, ingenuity and the ability to persuade colleagues."

Holiday Care has a database of over 1,200 inspected holiday properties, a website and a reservation service.

Holiday Care, tel: 01293 773716, or visit the website at: www.freespace.virgin.net/hol.care

 You can fill out a survey form for the Warm Homes campaign on DN's website, www.disabilitynow.org.uk (see also page 19)

Authority care under spotlight

Eight councils have been earmarked for urgent action for failing to improve care services.

The Social Services Performance Statistics, published in October, assessed 150 English local authorities in areas such as support for independent living.

The eight councils are Calderdale, the City of London, the Isles of Scilly, Islington, Kingston upon Hull, Knowsley, West Berkshire, and Windsor and Maidenhead.

Steven Lowe, community care policy officer at Age Concern England, said: "The worrying thing is that there are local authorities which do not provide help at home to many older people, but don't admit many to residential care either."

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DRC seeks life rights remit

The body set up by the Government to enforce disabled people's rights has asked ministers to extend its role to cover the Human Rights Act (HRA).

Bert Massie, chair of the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), has written to Education and Employment Secretary David Blunkett asking him to extend the DRC's powers to enforce rights to dig-

nified treatment and life under the HRA.

Massie said: "We know disabled people are marked down too often as "do not resuscitate" or are given low priority for expensive health interventions by non-disabled medics."

Denial of necessary social services support may also be undignified treatment, he said.

The Government said it

would respond by the end of November.

The DRC has produced a report *The Impact of the Human Rights Act for Disabled People*.*

• A DRC survey of 2,300 disabled and non-disabled people, *DRC 2000**, has shown that only 35 per cent feel disabled people get the help they need from social services and the

health system. Eighty-four per cent believe disabled students and children should have access to mainstream education. The DRC is pressing for education rights to be introduced in the coming parliamentary session.

Meanwhile Bob Niven, DRC chief executive, has revealed that 50 of the 100 DRC staff recruited so far are disabled.

*DRC, free, tel: 0845 762 2633.

In brief

Print money

Stationers WHSmith and Environmental Business Products are recycling used inkjet printer cartridges, with proceeds going to the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID). Recycling bags are available from WHSmith. RNID will receive 75p for every reusable cartridge.

Call checker

A new device means blind and partially sighted people can tell who is calling them before they pick up the phone. Talking Caller ID* announces the number of the caller before the phone is answered. The device works in conjunction with the caller display service available from most phone companies. Charges vary.

*£20 from the Royal National Institute for the Blind, tel: 08457 023153.

On the ball

Marcel Hirschman has become British TV's first deaf football commentator. Marcel will give signed commentary on UEFA Champions League games televised by ONdigital.

Sports cash

Sport England has launched the Millennium Festival Awards for All, offering grants of up to £5,000 to sports organisations. Priority will be given to services for disabled people which have an annual income of under £15,000. Tel: 0845 600 2040.



Can I show you a round? Employee Lorraine Rawlings gave Henry McLeish, Scottish Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning, a tour of St Jude's Laundry supported workshop for adults with disabilities in Edinburgh. The event was part of Capability Scotland's awareness raising week in October. www.capability-scotland.org.uk

Alzheimer's fear

People with Alzheimer's disease may not be getting the drugs they need, a report has found.

The report by London's Maudsley Hospital, *Health Authority Funding of Alzheimer's Drugs*, to be published in the *Health Service Journal*, has found that less than half the country's health authorities are providing funding for the Alzheimer's drugs aricept, exelon and remynyl, despite the fact that nine out of ten specialists claim they make them available.

The drugs can improve memory and quality of life and cost around £1,000 a year.

The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) is due to issue guidelines on the use of Alzheimer's treatments next month.

Harry Cayton, chief executive of the Alzheimer's Society, said: "This survey confirms

what we know to be true from the experience of people with Alzheimer's and their carers.

"If NICE approves the new drugs, as we hope it will do, those health authorities who are not currently funding have some major planning to do."

• A study* has found that spending on research into Alzheimer's treatment does not reflect the high cost of caring for people with dementia.

The study by the Centre for the Economics of Mental Health found that the annual £14bn cost to the state of caring for people with Alzheimer's exceeds the cost for heart disease and stroke combined. However, money spent on research is less than a tenth that spent on heart disease.

*King's College London, tel: 020 7848 0198, website: www.iop.kcl.ac.uk/iop/index.stm

Poster hands out strong message

The British Deaf Association (BDA) is using shock tactics in a new poster campaign calling for official recognition of British Sign Language (BSL).

The poster featuring a rude hand gesture was unveiled in October by Jeff McWhinney, chief executive of the BDA, as part of Deaf Awareness Week. The gesture symbolises the way the BDA thinks the Government feels about the campaign to get BSL officially recognised.

Jeff McWhinney said: "The BDA has had to resort to shock tactics to get politicians to sit up and take notice. We hope the public will realise that the poster is a visual pun with a strong message and become more aware of deaf issues because of the campaign."

Other events during Deaf Awareness Week included the launch of the BDA's Sign Your Name Campaign by Children's BBC presenters Angelica Bell and Adrian Dixon. The campaign



Signs of shock: Jeff McWhinney in front of the new BDA poster

asks people to sign their name using fingerspelling and send a postcard to ask Tony Blair to recognise BSL.

A unique business information service using BSL was launched by Patricia Hewitt, Minister for Small Business and E-commerce. Deaf business people will be able to access 20 hours of signed business information via desktop video-

phones. The service is part of the SignWorks project backed by the Department for Trade and Industry.

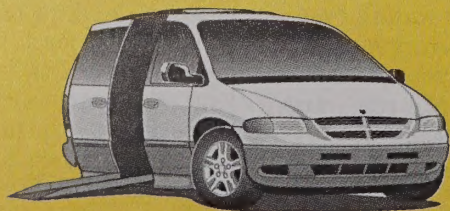
• The Royal National Institute for Deaf People's annual *Hear For All* exhibition in London, 13-14 October, was launched by Chris Smith, Culture Minister.

For details of BDA's campaign, tel/minicom: 020 7588 3520.

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UK lags on cannabis law



People in the US state of Nevada are set to vote on whether doctors should be allowed to prescribe cannabis to alleviate pain.

Voters will decide on 7 November whether to make the change to the state's constitution.

In Canada disabled people will be able to receive cannabis from the country's health ministry Health Canada within one year. The Canadian government is currently choosing a supplier to produce a crop of consistent quality.

Switzerland, meanwhile, has announced that it is to decriminalise the drug in a bill to be introduced next year.

The moves will fuel debate in the UK, where the chief scientist of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society said in October that medical use of purified cannabis could be legalised within two years and doctors should be allowed to prescribe non-smoked forms of the drug in the interim.

Professor Tony Moffat said purified forms of the drug were safe and would soon be available for people with conditions like multiple sclerosis (MS),

cerebral palsy and spinal injury. "I would like to see cannabis prescribed in the meantime," he said.

A recent survey in the *Mail on Sunday* showed that 87 per cent of the population think the drug should be legalised for medicinal purposes.

Liberal Democrat leader Charles Kennedy (*below*) has added his support to the UK campaign.

Speaking on ITV's *Dimbleby Programme* in October,



he said: "I myself am thoroughly persuaded that cannabis should be a prescribed drug for people with MS."

However, a study published in the journal *Nature Neuroscience* has now suggested that cannabis is addictive.

• Cumberland woman Lezley Gibson, who has MS and uses cannabis to ease pain, was acquitted by a jury in September. But she claimed that the trial has affected her health.

Mrs Gibson said: "My mobility has gone right down and I have not been able to go out of the house since."

See also page 12.



EASE-y-peasy: (left to right) judge Heather Mills, ShopMobility Woking's June Stephens (*front*) and Catherine Walsh (*back*), and Unum chairman and managing director Lawrence Churchill

EASE winners announced

A local shopping service and a family-run hotel stood out among the big boy companies at this year's EASE awards, where the public is asked to nominate quality services for disabled customers.

ShopMobility Woking won the new community achievement award for its customer service, including volunteer-guided shopping for partially sighted people. The Bond Hotel in Blackpool was commended for excellent all-round access.

Catherine Walsh, manager at ShopMobility Woking, said:

"We like to provide more than a bit of mobility equipment. People come in and have a cup of tea and a chat. We see them as a person, not a disability."

The special award "for overall awareness of the needs of people with disabilities" went to B&Q for the second year.

Other winners from 12,000 nominations were the Arriva bus company, Asda Stores, Beefeater Restaurant and Pubs, British Airports Authority London Gatwick, Meadowhall Shopping Centre, the National Trust, Nationwide Building

Society, Virgin Atlantic Airways and Virgin Holidays.

Margaret Hodge, Minister for Disabled People, was at the London Hilton for the awards.

EASE (Ease of Access, Service and Employment) is run by the charity Queen Elizabeth's Foundation with insurance company Unum and *The Express* newspaper. The judges included charity campaigner Heather Mills, Paralympic athlete Tanni Grey-Thompson, publicist Louise Clifford and disability consultant Dr Stephen Duckworth.

Seeing red over orange badge advice

A disabled London woman is furious after her husband was fined £136 for taking police advice not to display an orange badge.

Lisa Rollingson, 44, who lives in the London Borough of Newham, said her husband was advised last year by police not to keep the orange badge in the car overnight because of a spate of badge thefts.

But after concealing the badge they received a ticket for

parking in their own designated bay. They paid up after a failed appeal and after being threatened with bailiffs.

Mrs Rollingson said: "I am incensed. If you put your badge in the car you get your window smashed. If you don't put it in you get a fine."

Newham Council, which issued the parking tickets, said parking attendants could not be blamed if they gave tickets when orange badges

were not on display in a car.

A spokesperson said: "If a vehicle does not have a badge displayed and is found in a designated parking space for disabled people then a penalty charge notice will be issued."

A spokesperson for London Metropolitan Police confirmed that there had been a series of orange badge thefts in Newham. Eighteen badges went missing during one week in August this year.



"He's partially blind and wants to know if it's OK to touch one breast?"

Lapdance club leads the way

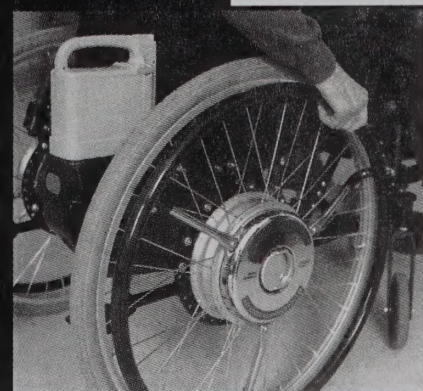
Blind and visually impaired customers may soon be able to touch the dancers at a south coast lapdance club. The Pussycats club in Hove, East Sussex, has applied to the local council to change the "no-touching" rules of their licence after two blind customers requested the service during a stag night visit.

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Internet warning

A disabled woman who signed up for an "unlimited" time connection with internet service provider Freeserve has been threatened with disconnection for using it too much.

Sally Wilson, who conducts most of her social life via the internet, paid £10 a month to join the Unlimited Freeserve Time Connection service.

But on 7 October she was told that her use of the service was "abnormally" high and that she would be disconnected in 30 days' time. She was advised to join the Freeserve No Ties service which costs £39.99 a month.

Ms Wilson told DN: "I am sure I am not the only disabled

person who uses the internet to this extent. At the very least, other Freeserve customers should be warned that the service advertised on their website as 'giving you unlimited internet calls day and night 365 days a year' does no such thing."

A spokesperson for Freeserve said: "Among the users we have written to, the average amount of time spent online is 16 or 17 hours a day. A few are spending as many as 30 hours or more online, using twin lines.

"This is an unacceptable breach of our terms and conditions. The important one to look at is section 1.9.5 of the terms and conditions of

service. Unlimited doesn't mean that your connection is always on."

David Prytherck, a disabled computer user and former project worker for the British Computer Society's Disability Group, said: "This has been happening a lot. I think it's very unethical. Either they've misjudged how many people would use an unlimited service or they've just used it as a marketing ploy.

"For disabled people the internet is going to be a major source of communication, so this will affect them much more, particularly as their financial situation is generally much more restricted."

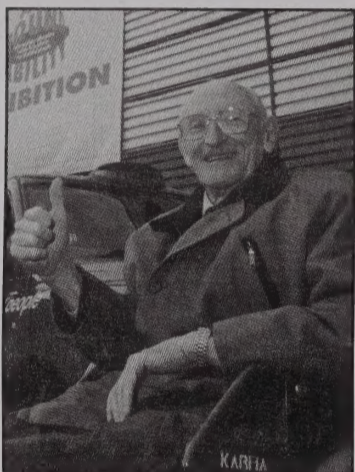
A pioneer and a powerful public speaker

Alex White writes William (Bill) Hargreaves MBE, who died on 3 October aged 80, was the first trustee and employee with cerebral palsy (CP) of the National Spastics Society (now Scope).

After four years on the executive council, Bill joined the staff to travel the country helping to place over 1,500 people with CP into their first jobs.

In 1962, he turned his attention to leisure and set up the 62 Clubs, self-help groups run by people with CP.

After his retirement in 1982, Bill remained involved with

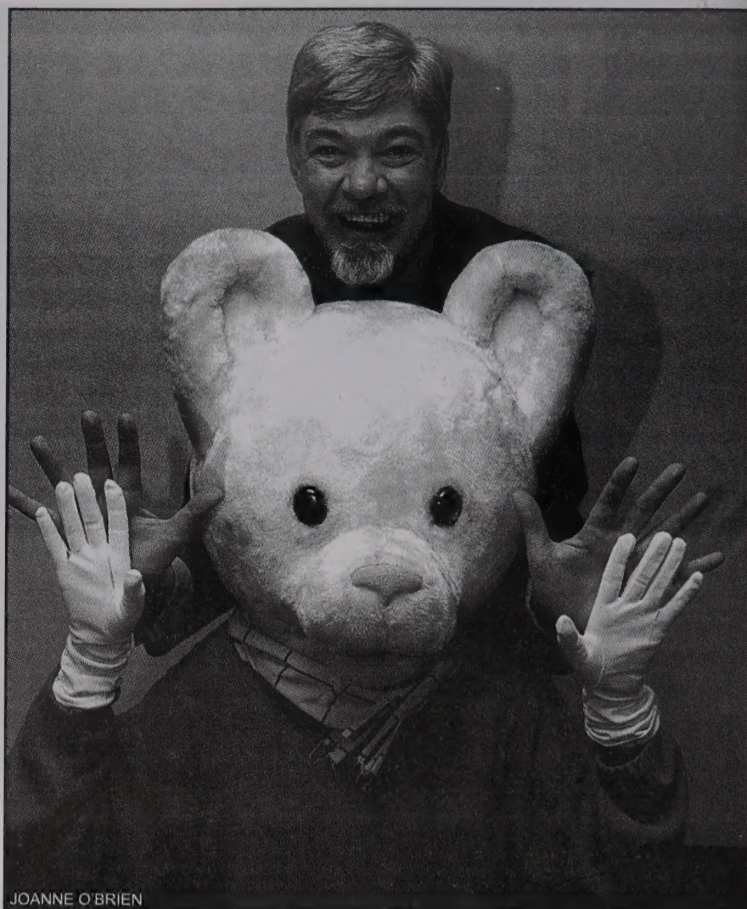


Handicapped Aid Trust, which gives grants to carers of disabled people on holiday.

He will be remembered as a pioneer who helped create opportunities for disabled people, as a powerful public speaker, and for his sense of humour.

Once, when a group of teddy boys aped his walk, which he acknowledged was like a drunken sailor, he told them: "You can't do it as well as I can - I've had more practice."

Alex White was working with Bill Hargreaves on his life story when he died. If you would be interested in seeing the book published, tel: 020 7619 7228.



JOANNE O'BRIEN

Helping hands: National Muscular Dystrophy Week was launched by TV's Matthew Kelly and Rupert Bear, mascot for Muscular Dystrophy Campaign, on 30 September. More events are planned for Rupert Bear's birthday, 8 November. www.muscular-dystrophy.org

Cash for carers

Carers on Income Support (IS) will receive extra money and people on Invalid Care Allowance (ICA) will be able to earn more without losing their benefits, the Government has announced.

The £191m package was unveiled by Alistair Darling, the Social Security Secretary, in October.

The carer's premium claimed by 220,000 people on IS will be increased by £2 a week. People on ICA will be able to earn £67 a week (previously £50) before losing their benefit. ICA will continue for up to eight weeks after the death of the person cared for and over-65s will be able to claim for the first time.

The Carers National Association (CNA) has been at the forefront of the campaign to improve the financial lot of carers. A CNA survey published in June found that one in five carers were cutting back on hot meals and buying out-of-date food.

Diana Whitworth, CNA chief executive, said: "The new measures will make a significant change to the lives of many carers. Although the £2 increase in the carer premium is of great importance, we will continue our campaign to ensure that the carer premium is doubled and that all carers are recognised for the enormous contribution they make to society."

In brief

New RNIB chair

Colin Low has taken over from Sir John Wall as chair of the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB).

Mr Low, 58, is a senior research fellow at City University and was a member of the Government's Disability Rights Task Force.

His priorities for the RNIB include full access to the information society for blind and partially sighted people.

Keep bikes at bay

The National Federation of the Blind has started a petition calling on local authorities to keep cyclists off pavements.

For a petition form, tel: 01924 291313.

New motor insurance

A special motor insurance policy designed to meet the needs of disabled motorists is available from Privilege Insurance.

Tel: 0870 607 0265.

Drug choice worries

Six out of ten people with serious mental health problems are given no choice over their drug treatments, a survey has found.

The survey, to be published at a best practice conference* in London, 8 December, was carried out by the National Schizophrenia Fellowship (NSF), Mind and the Manic Depression Fellowship.

It is the biggest ever survey of users, taking responses from 2,600 people with serious mental illnesses like schizophrenia and manic depression. Early findings show that 61 per cent were not given the chance to discuss drug options.

An NSF spokesman said: "It is a shocking figure. All the difficulties that the medical

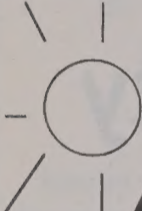
profession claim about non-compliance with medication stem from the fact that the medication might not be suitable for the person."

Side effects of the old type of psychotic medication known as "typical drugs" can include shaking and breathlessness.

Patients have reported that newer medication known as "atypical drugs" produce fewer side effects. But in exceptional cases atypicals can cost 100 times more to prescribe.

The research is being published to influence the recommendations of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence, which is currently looking at mental health treatments.


*Tel: 020 8547 9202.




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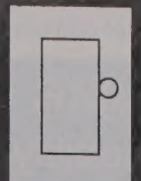
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Rights ruling

The Human Rights Act does not prevent food and water being withdrawn from people in a Persistent Vegetative State (PVS), according to a landmark High Court ruling.

Permission was given to withdraw artificial nutrition and hydration from two patients in PVS by Dame Elizabeth Butler-Sloss, president of the High Court Family Division in October.

Under common law established after the case of Hillsborough disaster survivor Tony Bland in 1993, PVS patients may be "allowed to die" in this way if their families agree. Protestors hoped Article 2 of the Human Rights Act introduced in October, which guarantees the "right to life", would make such action illegal.

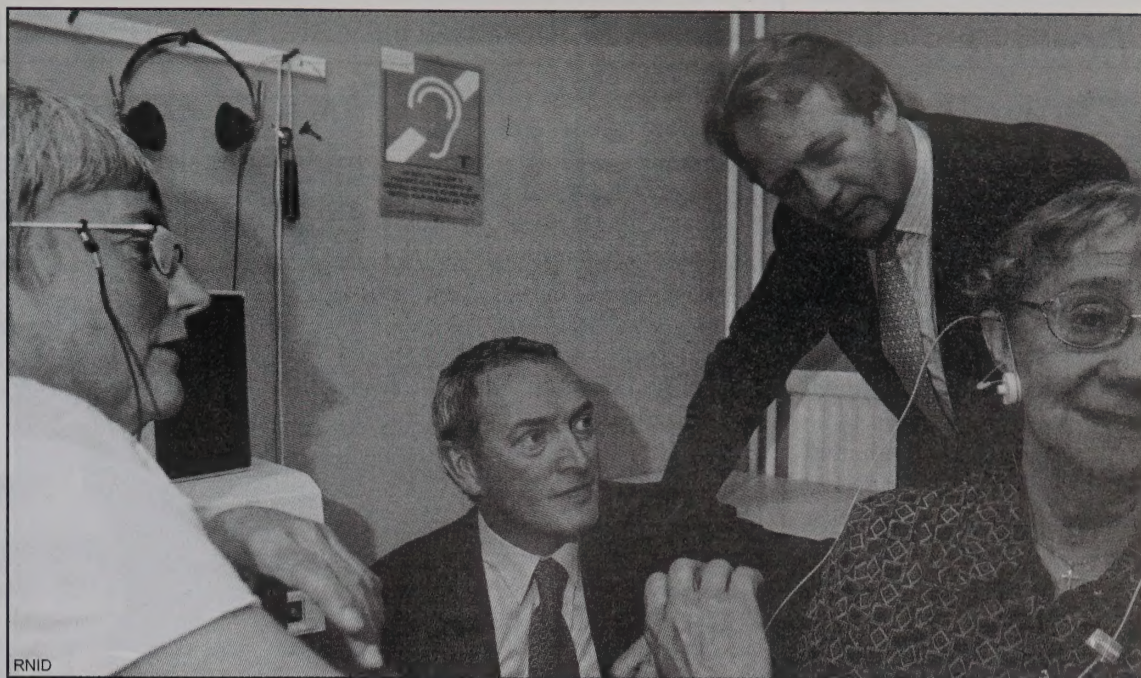
However, Dame Butler-Sloss ruled that it was in the best

interests of the women, known as Ms H, 36, and Mrs M, 49, to allow artificial feeding and hydration to be stopped.

Rachel Hurst, director of Disability Awareness in Action, said: "I honestly don't understand how judges could come to this decision. The right to life is your right to life – it's not a question of whether it's in your best interests to have that life."

"It's one thing deciding that these people should be allowed to die, but to starve them to death is horrendous."

• A woman has received £38,000 in an out-of-court settlement after she was almost buried alive when a GP mistook her diabetic collapse for a fatal stroke. Maureen Jones, 63, from Thwing, East Yorkshire, was seen moving and was revived just before her funeral in April 1996.



Listen up: The first digital hearing aids to be provided free on the NHS were fitted at Addenbrooke's NHS Trust, Cambridge, in October. At the event were (l to r) senior chief audiologist Nigel Bligh, Health Minister John Hutton, RNID chief executive James Strachan and user Patricia Goddard.

In brief

Winter warmth

The Department of Health has joined with other government departments and voluntary groups to launch the Keep

Warm Keep Well campaign. It is offering a free booklet on keeping warm and has opened the new freephone Winter Warmth Advice Line, tel: 0800 085 7000, minicom: 0800 085 7857, Mon-Fri, 8am-8pm.

For an update on DN's Warm Homes Campaign, see page 19.

Graduates show companies the way

Four disabled university graduates have written a guide, *The Invisible Graduate**, aimed at helping companies employ disabled university leavers.

The graduates, who took part in the Fast-Track graduate training scheme run by Scope, were asked to examine recruitment procedures at Lloyds TSB and other companies.

The fast-trackers, Jim Peace, Samm Legg, Caroline Watson

and Anna Lickley, recommended that companies should target universities with a high proportion of disabled students, and make sure websites are accessible and disabled people appear in recruitment material.

Jim Peace, who has dyslexia, said he had been turned down for interviews even when employers displayed the "two ticks" symbol, which shows a company is "positive about dis-

abled people". "I lost confidence in most recruiters and their willingness to treat disabled graduates fairly," he said.

Mr Peace now has a job at Lloyds TSB.

Claire Jones, graduate recruitment manager at Lloyds TSB, told DN: "The guide gives good recommendations which are applicable to all organisations."

*Free, tel: 020 7619 7299.

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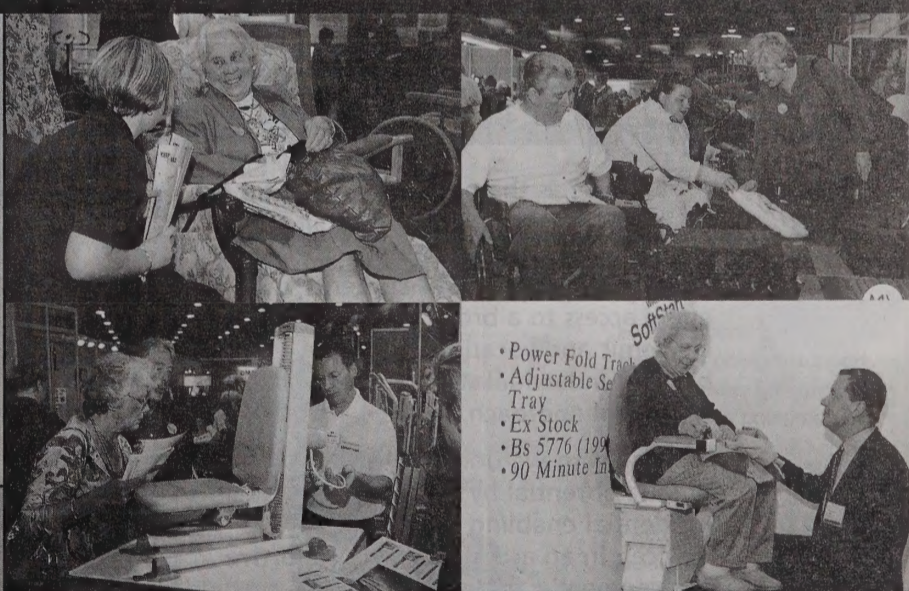
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DN

DN gives a round-up of some of the disability stories appearing in the media over the past few weeks

Gene fears

Genetic screening has been used to ensure that a baby boy born in the US did not have his older sister's fatal condition and that his cells could be used to help treat her.

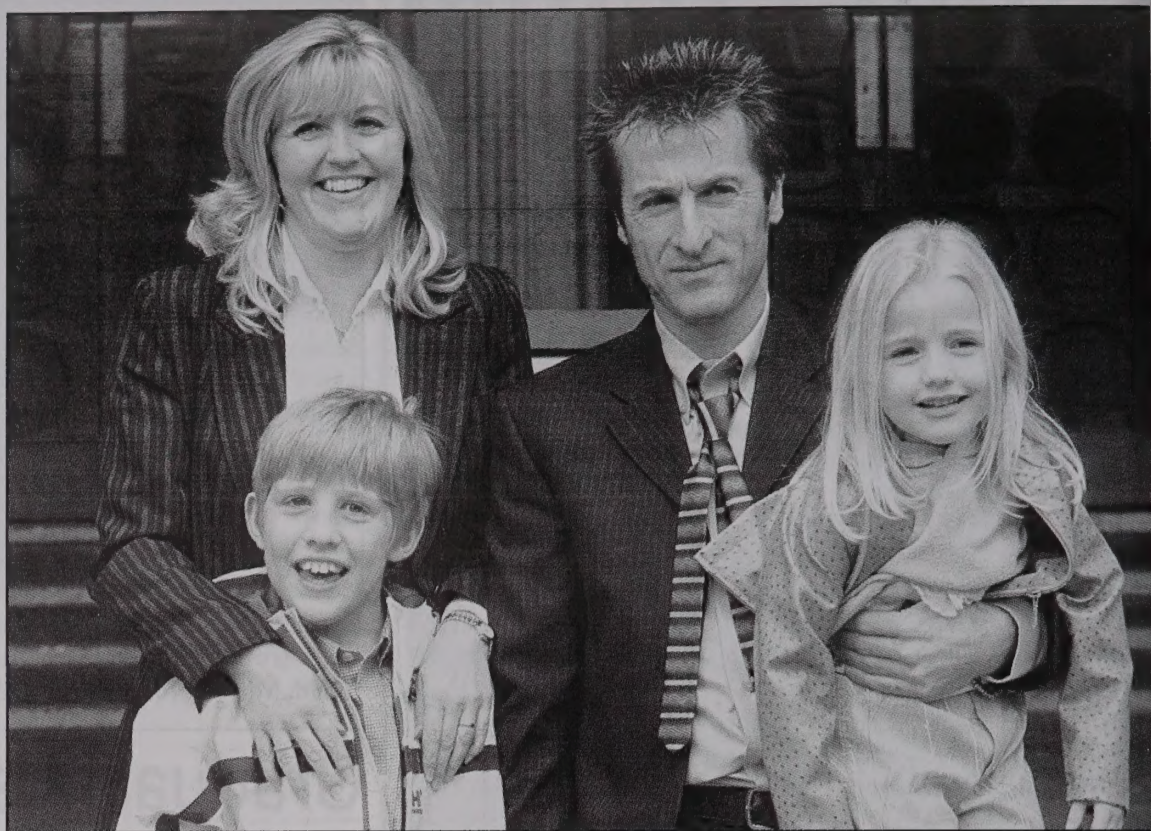
Adam Nash was selected from 15 test-tube fertilised embryos using pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) techniques before being implanted in his mother Lisa's womb.

Stem cells from five-week-old Adam's umbilical cord were used to treat his sister Molly in September. Molly, six, now has an 85-90 per cent chance of recovering from the inherited condition Fanconi anaemia.

The process has led to increased fears that genetic screening will be used to create "designer" babies. At present five clinics in the UK are licensed to use PGD, but they must apply to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) to do so.

An HFEA spokesperson said: "PGD is currently only used to avoid passing on a serious, often life-threatening, genetic disorder to children. We would consider applications from UK clinics to perform similar procedures to the Nashes', but they would need careful consideration."

Speaking in a personal capacity, Bill Albert, chair of the British Council of Disabled People's International Committee and member of the Human Genetics Committee, said: "As a parent, I would do anything to save my child's life, but what if this gives the green light for a wider and questionable social agenda? In this case, that agenda is free-market eugenics, where no one talks of eliminating disabled people, but only about choice. Unregulated PGD offers the perfect tool to foster this brave new world."



Out-of-court win: Redmond Pagin, 11, from Sprotborough, South Yorkshire, received £2m damages in October after Doncaster District Health Authority settled his claim for damages out of court. Redmond was born with cerebral palsy after a delay in his birth at Doncaster Royal Infirmary. He is pictured with his mother Lisa, his father Karl and his five-year-old sister Willow.

HEATHCLIFF O'MALLEY

In brief

French investigation

Police are investigating claims that residents of a home for people with mental illness were forcibly sterilised. Hysterectomies are alleged to have been carried out on 13 residents of the Aid Through Work Centre near Paris, 1991-98.

Twin decision

The Court of Appeal has given permission for the Maltese conjoined twins known as Mary and Jodie (DN, October) to be separated. The separation would result in Mary's death.

Mary and Jodie's parents have been given leave to appeal to the House of Lords and then to the European Court of Human Rights.

Charities slam care charge plans

Over 15 charities representing older and disabled people have jointly condemned the Government's plans for the future of long-term care.

Groups including the Alzheimer's Society and Help the Aged launched a campaign in September against measures announced in the NHS Plan.

Under the Government's proposals, "registered nursing time" in nursing homes would be free, while personal care provided by healthcare assistants would be means-tested.

A Royal Commission in July recommended that all personal care should be free.

Harry Cayton, director of the Alzheimer's Society, said: "The majority of people in care homes have dementia. They and their carers are angry that they must bear the cost of their chronic illness, while others are cared for by the NHS."

A government spokesperson said: "Each patient will have an individual assessment by a nurse and that will form the framework for what kind of

treatment they receive. It is likely to be a mixture of nursing needs and personal care, and personal care will not be free."

The measures are due to be introduced in 2001.

A consultation period is expected soon. For details, tel: 020 7210 4850.

• A pensioner is challenging the Scottish system for publicly-funded nursing home places. Arthur Mac-Gregor, 90, wants the courts to rule that his council cannot delay providing him with a place.

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What opposition wins could hold in store

Draft pre-election manifestos have been published by the leading opposition parties.

The policies were debated at party conferences and go forward to form part of the election manifestos which will be published just before the next general election.

Key points from the documents include several of relevance to disabled people.

Liberal Democrats

- Introduce a carer's benefit to replace Invalid Care Allowance (ICA) and abolish age discrimination (carers over 65 cannot currently claim ICA).
- Introduce an Equality Act to tackle all forms of discrimination, extending existing disability discrimination law and incorporating protection against discrimination on the basis of age and sexuality.
- Introduce a Human Rights Commission that could enforce

the Human Rights Act.

- Restore benefits for 16 and 17-year-olds (abolished by the Conservatives).
- Improve support for the voluntary sector.
- Make health authorities responsible for ensuring that those discharged from hospital have somewhere to go.
- Introduce measures to increase pensioners' incomes, particularly for those over 75.
- Reduce taxes for the lowest paid.

Conservatives

- Let disabled people keep more savings before benefits are clawed back.
- Remove local authority cap on budgets.
- Give pensioners higher basic state pension, instead of the minimum income guarantee.
- Encourage independence and stronger leadership in the voluntary sector, reducing regu-

lations to make applying for government grants easier.

- Introduce specialisation in GP teams to enable them to deal with more severe conditions.
- Introduce measures to move people "off welfare wherever possible".
- Abolish the New Deal and replace it with incentives for employers.
- Encourage saving, personal responsibility, family life and marriage.
- Introduce a "can work, must work" guarantee - work or lose unemployment benefits.

Information from RADAR and first published in the RADAR Bulletin, October 2000.

The Labour Party did not publish a pre-election manifesto, but its National Policy Forum Reports to Conference sets out Labour's plans. £7.50, tel: 08705 900200.

See also conferences, p12-13.

Thalidomide UK raises child concerns

People affected by thalidomide claim to have evidence that their disabled children are also affected by the drug.

Thalidomide UK, a campaign group, claims that ten children of the 424 people who were affected by the drug and are still alive are also disabled. Medical opinion has so far held that it is impossible for these children to have been affected by thalidomide and that their conditions could be genetically inherited.

Thalidomide UK met with Diageo, the company which bought the drug manufacturer Distillers, in October.

Nick Holness, whose daughter Rebecca is disabled, gave evidence which he claimed showed her condition was not genetically inherited.

The group called for a trust fund to be set up for their disabled children and for more research into the issue.

Glen Harrison, whose daughter

Georgina, seven, is disabled, said: "We're not prepared to go through what our parents went through in the 1960s and 1970s when they were told the drug had not caused the deformities. We didn't know the answers then and we still don't. We will campaign until justice is done."

Ian Wright, director of communications at Diageo, said: "There is an alternative explanation for those ten children. It is possible that a number of people have been misdiagnosed as having thalidomide-related disabilities. There is another condition which causes foreshortened limbs and our medical experts have said this could be one explanation."

"In the past we've said that if research needs doing, we're happy to look at the potential for us to play a part in that. We will look at these requests and come back with a comprehensive, well-grounded answer as quickly as possible."

Illness and poverty isolate older people

Older people with long-term illnesses are three times more likely to feel isolated than their peers, according to research published in October.

The study, carried out by MORI for Help the Aged and British Gas, found that 31 per cent of over-65s with a long-term illness feel isolated compared to ten per cent of older people as a whole.

Older people questioned said better health and a higher income would relieve their situation.

The research comes in the wake of the Department of Social Security's annual "poverty report", which found that the number of pensioners in poverty has risen by almost 100,000 since the last election.

Help the Aged has called on the Government to combat social isolation.

Mervyn Kohler, the charity's head of public affairs, said: "This survey illustrates the sheer scale of the isolation felt by many older people in Britain and shows that poverty and poor health play a key role."

www.helptheaged.org.uk



On the SURFACE: (left to right) access researchers Andrew Lewis, Judith Irving and Marcus Ormerod

ANDREW SOUTHALL

Dome comes in handy

A team at Salford University is to examine access features at the Millennium Dome to help develop a code of practice for public areas.

Salford University Research Focus on Accessible Environments (SURFACE) has been given £300,000 by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council to carry out the project.

It will work with access consultants Buro Happold to see how access was developed from the early briefing papers right through to construction.

Marcus Ormerod, SURFACE director, said the guidance would help engineers understand how to implement access.

"For us it is about getting the link between theory and prac-

tice together into an understandable format so designers don't have to work it out for themselves," he said.

Wheelchair access was very good at the Dome, he added, but facilities for hearing impaired people and lighting had been a problem, so the research would also look at how things could go wrong.

The team will also examine smaller projects.

• The Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) has published the new policy statement *Better Public Buildings*, giving a checklist for people commissioning better public buildings. It includes access demands. *Public Information Unit, DCMS, 2-4 Cockspur Street, London SW1Y 3DH.*

Half a million risk blindness – RNIB report

Over half a million disabled people are at risk of blindness or even death because they cannot get out of their homes for eye tests.

A report by the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) blames a failure to pay optometrists enough to make home visits. *Unseen and Forgotten: Equal Access to Optometry Services for People Confined to Home** also says mobility services to take people for tests are inadequate.

Lynne Nicholl, eye health policy officer at the RNIB, said: "There are almost 600,000 housebound people at risk of losing their sight. Many of the most vulnerable people in society are failing to have their needs met. There is no regulated system to ensure services are consistently provided throughout the country."

The RNIB's figure is based on the number of people over 65 and entitled to free eye tests who are not independently mobile.

It said that tests could detect glaucoma and diabetic eye diseases which can cause blindness. Tests can also detect life-threatening eye cancer.

The report recommends that the Department of Health provides adequate funding for home eye tests and that optometrists should be forced to provide the service.

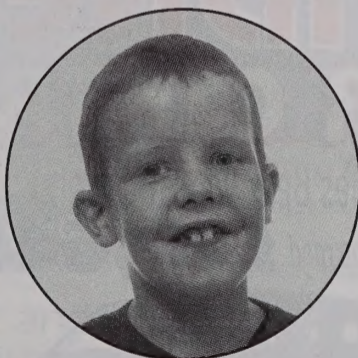
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Have you got a holiday story to tell? Send your idea to the address on page 2. DN's three-part holiday special begins in January.

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Michael is developing his use of spoken word and uses MAKATON signs and symbols to aid his understanding. He is a lively and energetic child, who enjoys going to the park, running and riding a bike. Michael has a good appetite and sleeps well. He really enjoys seeing friends, his sisters and grandparents with whom he has occasional contact. Michael is placed in a specialist residential school in the Midlands.



We are looking for a family, preferably with no younger children, who can offer him respite care most weekends and school holidays. The family should have lots of commitment and some experience of caring for disabled children. The placement will be supported by a fostering allowance.

**Please contact: Michelle Littaur on
020.7527 8567**

If you could look after a child with a disability on a regular short-term basis, contact:

Islington Council Family Placement Service, 29 Highbury New Park, London N5 2EN. Telephone: 020 7527 8560

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DN11/00

Autism clue

Researchers in America are closer to understanding the way that parents pass on autism to their children.

The research has led to the possibility of genetic testing and treatments for the condition.

For some time scientists have believed that autism genes may be present in chromosomes seven and 15. Genes and chromosomes are made from DNA, the blueprint for life.

But researchers at Duke University Medical Centre, led by Dr Margaret Pericak-Vance, now believe that autism may depend on which parent passes

on the genes. Genes inherited from the father on chromosome seven and genes from the mother on chromosome 15 may determine whether a child develops autism.

Allison Ashley-Koch, one of the researchers, said: "Our research is preliminary and needs further examination. But as we continue to learn more about the genetics of autistic disorder, we will eventually be able to offer genetic testing to families at risk and ultimately develop therapies to improve the quality of life for individuals with autistic disorder."

promote awareness of the dangers of high and low blood pressure.

For more information, tel: 020 8725 0650.

Arthritis info

The charity Arthritis Care has launched a pack to help people with arthritis fight for better treatment.

It includes information about new drugs like Vioxx and Celebrex and how to lobby for them.

For details, tel: 020 7380 6548.

Cell finds bring cloning closer

Scientists have discovered how embryo cells turn into brain, skin and other body tissue, bringing the cloning of human body parts a step closer.

Stem cells from embryos have the ability to grow into any other type of tissue.

The researchers based at the Howard Hughes Medical

Institute at Harvard University and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem have studied the way that eight chemicals known as growth factors encourage stem cells to grow in certain ways.

One type encouraged cells to become muscle, while another encouraged cells to become brain or skin. A third type

encouraged pancreas and liver cells to grow.

Until now scientists have had little idea how the growth occurs. The research may lead to ways of controlling cell growth and the cloning of body parts to aid treatments for conditions like Parkinson's disease and heart diseases.

Tool would reduce surgery scarring

American and German researchers have produced a device which detects the best way to make cuts during operations to reduce scarring.

Dr Michael Patterson of McMaster University, Ontario, and German scientist Matthias Essenpreis have created a sensor to measure the way light is reflected off the skin.

It can detect areas of collagen protein fibre, which gives the skin elasticity. By avoiding cutting these fibres there is a reduced risk of scarring.

The device was tested by Dr Tim Mills of University College London.

He said it would help in any area of surgery, but especially on the face.



Flower power: A new drug called remynil, based on a substance found in daffodils called galantamine, was launched in September to help short-term memory in people with Alzheimer's disease like the woman above. Alzheimer's Society, tel: 0845 300 0336. ROY PETERS

In brief

Mind book

Mind has published *Making Sense of Voices: The Mental Health Professional's Guide to Working with Voice Hearers*, looking at how people can cope with hearing voices.

£25, tel: 020 8221 9666.

Blood pressure charity

The Blood Pressure Association is a new charity launched to

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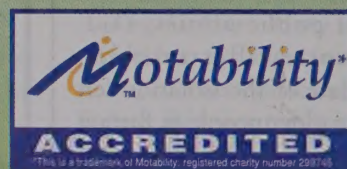
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E&OE



Sweet sound of success

A West Sussex audio newspaper has won an award from BT.

Chichester Area Talking News beat off competition from 520 other talking newspapers to win the BT Soundings Award of Excellence 2000.

The 25-year-old publication is a 90-minute quarterly audio magazine distributed to over 500 visually impaired people

in the Chichester, Bognor Regis, Midhurst and Petworth areas of West Sussex.

The award-winning summer 2000 edition was praised for a report on an open day at Downland Open Air Museum in Singleton, West Sussex, featuring events like glass-blowing and blacksmithing.

Graham Brooks, chairman

of the audio newspaper, said: "It was very much a team effort by the interviewer, technical operator and editor that produced this winning entry."

Harrow's *Hear-Abouts* and Lincoln Talking Tapes' *Take Ten* were runners-up in the competition, organised with the Talking Newspaper Association of the United Kingdom.



What winning work: A Kent Volunteers Award for Volunteering Excellence was presented to Martin Symons (front centre) in October by ex-Eastenders star Leila Birch (front left). With them are Kent County Council chair Brenda Trench (front right), council leader Sandy Bruce-Lockhart (back left) and Clive Hayward, master of ceremonies. Martin's charity High Hopes helps disabled people take part in adventure holidays. *High Hopes*, tel: 01732 848785.

Awards for sex education

Schools in Lancaster and Hertfordshire have been praised for their sex education programmes by the Family Planning Association.

Ivy Bank High School, run by the local authority in Lancaster, which has students with hearing impairments, and Meldreth Manor School, Hertfordshire, which teaches pupils with severe physical and learning disabilities and is run by the charity Scope, both won the Pamela Sheridan Award. They received £550 each.

In brief

Portsmouth guides

Portsmouth Council of Community Service (PCCS) has published a guide to services available to disabled people in the town, *Who's What? Who's Where?*, and *A Guide for Parents of a Child with Special Needs*. Both are free. For more information, call Amanda Morris, PCCS information officer, tel: 023 9282 7110.

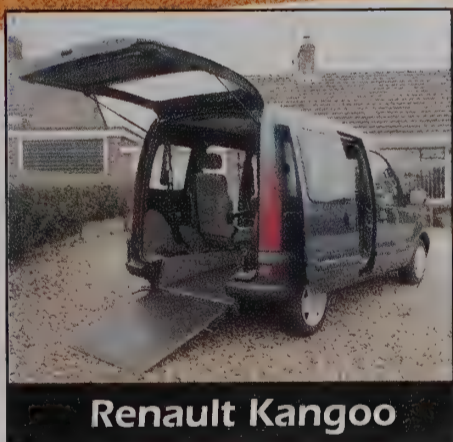
Manchester rail study

The Strategic Rail Authority is leading a study into how the railway in Greater Manchester needs to be developed in the next 20 years. One of the issues to be tackled is obstacles which stop people using rail services. Tel: 020 7654 6000, website: www.sra.gov.uk

More regional information on page 39.



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News from the Conservative Party conference – Sally Brown reports

Care plans

Tory disability plans include greater consistency of care and a higher profile for the Access to Work (AtW) scheme.

Disability spokesman Tim Boswell (*below*) told a fringe meeting that, if elected, his party would make better use of funds to improve consistency of care for disabled people from one authority to another.

He also described the present provision of disability aids and wheelchairs as “dire”.

“It’s because things are badly managed,” he said. “These things mustn’t be denied to



people because of the incompetency of suppliers. It doesn’t mean a blank cheque, just more sensible use of the money.”

Mr Boswell told *DN* that AtW, which provides equipment to help disabled people do their jobs, was also high in

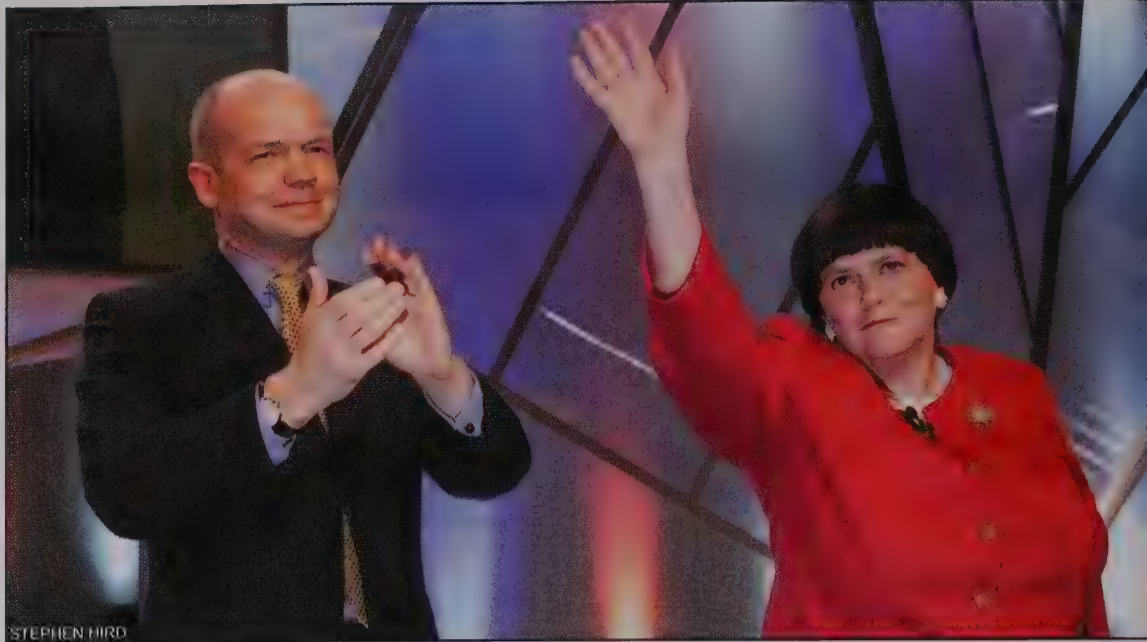
Tory priorities. “It is an extremely useful scheme which is currently very poorly understood by employers.”

He said the Conservatives would look “very carefully” at benefits and make changes to the Welfare Reform and Pensions Act to get rid of disincentives.

“We’re very concerned about cases like Colin Hughes [*DN*, March],” he said. “Where people are holding down a successful job they need to be able to continue to do that.”

Preliminary Conservative disability policies are set out in the party’s pre-election manifesto (*see news review*). More specific measures will be included in the full manifesto to be published shortly before the next general election.

• Tim Boswell was one of four Tory MPs who took time off from the conference to play a game of wheelchair basketball. He teamed up with Eric Pickles, David Amess and Tim Loughton to challenge the Lord Mayor Treloar team from Alton, Hampshire, and the Hampshire Hedgehogs in an event organised by the Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus.



Hollow praise: William Hague applauded Anne Widdecombe then distanced himself from her proposals

Drugs plans are ‘misjudged’

Disabled people using cannabis for therapeutic purposes would have faced an automatic fine of £100 under the Tories, according to “zero tolerance” proposals from Shadow Home Secretary Anne Widdecombe.

The policy would include people with conditions like multiple sclerosis who use the drug to relieve their symptoms.

A spokesperson for the Conservative Party confirmed that no one would be exempt from the new policy. “People found in possession would be served a penalty notice, irrespective of the circumstances.”

Claire Hodges, director of the Alliance for Cannabis Therapeutics, said the policy was “blinkered”. “They’ve just

completely misjudged public opinion. It’s completely wrong to take seriously ill people through the court.”

• *DN* editor Mary Wilkinson wrote to the *Daily Mail*, *Guardian* and *Sunday Telegraph* to criticise the drug proposals. Tory leader William Hague has now distanced himself from Ms Widdecombe’s announcement.

Tory wins could boost disabled MP numbers

A Conservative win at the general election could mean more disabled members of parliament. The party is advancing at least two disabled candidates.

Peter Booth, who is registered blind, is prospective parliamentary candidate (PPC) for Chorley, Lancashire. He told

DN: “I came second in so many constituencies until I put out leaflets saying what I could and couldn’t do.

“It’s important that disabled people fight hard to make sure they are a role model, to make sure, when laws are made, that their voices are heard.”

Robert Halfon, PPC for Harlow in Essex, who has a mobility impairment, said: “We, not Labour, promote the interests of the disadvantaged.”

Kevin Shinkwin, a charity campaigns officer who has brittle bones, is also hoping to become a PPC.

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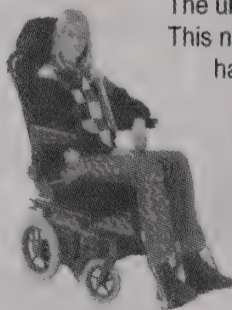
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Access denied

Disabled people were turned away from the accessible entrance to the Conservative conference in Bournemouth.

Unofficial sources estimated that as many as 30 people were unable to use the entrance to the Bournemouth International Conference Centre on 2 October because they did not have a “green card” disabled pass. Delivery of the passes was delayed by the fuel crisis, according to organisers.

Glenys Hocking-Davis, a member of Harborough Conservative Association, said: “I still haven’t had my disability pack, so I haven’t got my green card. I haven’t even found the disabled entrance. I only got in yesterday with assistance.”

A spokesperson for the Conservative Party said: “We weren’t aware there had been any problems. There were many disabled people in here before. Those people who didn’t get them had to go to the accreditation office.”

Job scheme jam

Margaret Hodge, Minister for Disabled People, has admitted the Government is deliberately under-publicising efforts to help disabled people do their jobs.

The remarks followed an attempt by Chancellor Gordon Brown to trumpet Labour's success in getting disabled people into jobs during his conference speech.

He said: "For the first time in years unemployment among the disabled is now falling as we make the right to work a reality."

But responding to a report by the charity RADAR which found that 96 per cent of small employers have limited or no knowledge of Access to Work (AtW), which provides equipment to help disabled people do their jobs, Ms Hodge (*above right*) admitted that the Government did not sufficiently advertise the scheme.

"The reason we do not pub-

licise AtW as much as I would like is that in the last two years we have doubled the number of people we help and increased the budget and we still overspend," she said. "Until I can persuade the Chancellor to give me even more resources it would be silly to advertise."

She later said she was confident she could get more money for AtW from Education and Employment Minister David Blunkett.

The scheme helped 13,000 people in 1997-8, rising to 21,000 people in 1999-2000. But ministers claim one million unemployed disabled people would like to find work.

Ms Hodge said the Government wants employers to accept responsibility for making reasonable adjustments themselves in the spirit of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). The average cost of an adjustment is £40, but some of



the help given by AtW can come to thousands of pounds.

Nick Goss, employment officer at RADAR, said: "Either it is a national scheme or it is not. We cannot have discrimination on the grounds of knowledge."

Ms Hodge said there would be a DDA awareness campaign aimed at small to medium-sized business this autumn.

She also suggested that the Government may set the employee threshold at which firms come under DDA employment provisions at five staff. The current threshold is 15.

Communication aid users will be helped, Hutton tells DN

The Government is to help disabled people who have to pay for their own communication aids.

Responding to the Scope survey *Speak for Yourself*, which showed that half of communication aid users have to



Uphill struggle: Garth Pillinglindsell in front of Steamers café

Gummed footprints help, but access sticky in other areas

Visually impaired people were certainly helped at conference by sticky footprints on carpets guiding visitors around.

But guide dog user Wayne Busbridge, of Gravesend, was not impressed that police would not let him cross a road outside the security cordon to an area where his dog could go to the toilet. "They made me go down dangerous backstreets. It should have been within the cordon."

In general, access was good, but scooter user Garth Pillinglindsell, of Old Bexley, ran over the foot of a policeman who was pushing him up a portable wooden ramp which was too

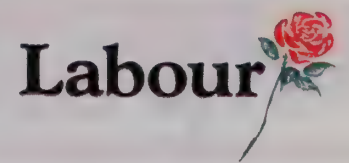
steep, to get into Steamers café. This belongs to the Brighton Hilton Metropol, part of the main conference venue.

The hotel said it had spent £250,000 on adaptations in the last three years and would make further changes.

Damien Sarsfield, a National Executive member who uses crutches, and wheelchair user Veronica Wilson, of Scunthorpe, complained about the distance disabled people had to travel from a car park to the main conference centre.

"We were told there would be enablers at the car park, but we never saw any," Ms Wilson said.

Rod Hermeston reports back from the Labour Party conference



£50m earmarked for carer breaks

Health Secretary Alan Milburn has announced an extra £50m to allow 75,000 more carers to have a break.

Spending on respite breaks for carers will double to £100m by 2004, Mr Milburn told the conference.

He said: "We should never forget the millions of carers who day in, day out provide care for family and friends too ill or infirm to care for themselves."

Diana Whitworth, chief executive of Carers National Association, said: "The extension of the grant will make a real difference."

Meanwhile, at a fringe meeting held by the charity Leonard Cheshire on the future of long-term care, Health Minister John Hutton said there was still a chance to influence the Government over the types of care which people will have to pay for in the future.

In its response to the Royal Commission on Long-Term Care, the Government said that personal care should be means-tested, while nursing care would be free.

But Mr Hutton told the meeting that the Government is to consult on definitions of nursing care.

London GP Iona Heath, one of the commissioners, condemned the decision not to provide personal care free but added: "I hope what we have heard about the definition of care being up for grabs will have the potential to offer more for elderly and disabled people."

Mr Milburn also announced the membership of the new NHS Modernisation Board to advise on implementing the Government's NHS Plan.

The board includes Harry Cayton, chief executive of the Alzheimer's Society, Cliff Prior, chief executive of the National Schizophrenia Fellowship, and Rabbi Julia Neuberger, chief executive of the King's Fund.

All hospitals are to offer booked appointments by March, Mr Milburn also announced.

On pensions, the Government said the minimum income guarantee is to rise to £90 a week for a single person. No date has been set.

Speak for Yourself

James Ford



fund their aids themselves, Health Minister John Hutton told DN: "We will be making an announcement so that resources can be put into this area. It is a totally unacceptable state of affairs."

Scope campaigns officer James Ford said: "This is excellent news. We look forward to their official announcement. Communication is vital to disabled people and we feel that having the right equipment is a human rights issue."

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Team talk

Tanni Grey Thompson



I'm lucky this month to be writing my diary from sunny Brisbane. The Olympics are over and my exhibition race went pretty well (fourth place in the final). I'm now waiting for the rest of the team to arrive for final Paralympics preparations.

In Sydney over a late-night,

post-race coffee, a small group of us gathered to put the world to rights.

Eventually we got on to disability rights, and Scott Hollenbeck (a US athlete and prolific campaigner) began to explain why he would never spend any of his tourist dollars in the UK.

He accepted the inaccess-

ibility of the Underground and cities that were built hundreds of years ago.

His real complaint was the treatment he gets at airports. He always feels his independence is undermined by their apparent refusal to bring his day chair to the gate.

Having defended airports wholeheartedly against Scott's

complaints, I am now rushing off to find a computer to e-mail him my apologies.

My husband Ian flew home two days ago and faced the usual dilemma of what to do with his day chair. Obviously he should get a "return to gate" tag (very large and very fluorescent), but what else to do?

Should he also tag his chair to the stopover destination or to the final stop? If it's checked to the final stop then often it will go straight through. If you check it as far as the stopover and it doesn't arrive, you risk losing it for days or forever. I've tried both methods this year, which resulted in my race chair being lost twice and my day chair being mangled.

Ian asked the airline what to do and took their advice, but he was told when he returned to the UK that the "return to gate" tag didn't mean anything. Apparently, it was health and safety and all that. Funny — when we used the same airport, Heathrow, two weeks before, everything worked perfectly.

I like to think that I can be fairly reasonable. I understand the need for rules, that airports are large, etc. Tell us that some UK airports have a different policy and I don't suppose I'd mind — at least I'd be prepared to have my independence temporarily removed.

But consistency would be nice, and at the very least I hope I am never asked again "Are you sure you can't walk?" when the system breaks down. Then, again, I guess I shouldn't dare to travel so much.

Now I've got that off my chest I feel better and I'm going to write to the airport. I know what their answer will be, but at least I'll be doing something and it breaks the monotony of training in one of the most beautiful places in the world.

Tanni Grey-Thompson is a Paralympic gold medallist. As a contestant, she was not permitted to write about 2000's Games.

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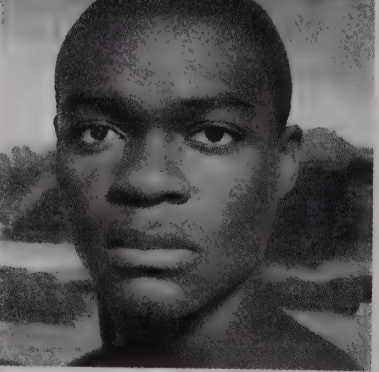
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In brief

- British Blind Sport hosts its schools' under-16 football championship at Aston Villa Leisure Centre, Birmingham, 18 November. Tel: 01926 424247.
- Warrington Vikings Wheelchair Basketball Club offers coaching every Saturday for 13-18-year-olds (12-2pm) and 5-12-year-olds (12-3pm), Birchwood Sports Centre, Warrington. A session for all ages runs every Sunday, 6pm. Tel: 01925 489520 or 01925 816599.

Graham Bool captures all the razzmatazz of the Paralympics opening

Let the Games begin



Rising high: a huge inflatable at the opening ceremony

For full coverage of the Paralympics, see the December issue of DN.



Light my fire: Louise Sauvage, Australian track and marathon gold, lights the Paralympic flame



Flying the flags: (left) performers at the opening ceremony and (right) the GB team shows its colours

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Peter Mansell talks to Rod Hermeston about his blunt management style and RADAR's rescue

Working as a grave digger 20 odd years ago, Peter Mansell could not have imagined he would be telling me today how he dug national disability charity RADAR out of a hole.

Born in Crystal Palace, the son of a policeman, 42-year-old Mansell is very much a working-class lad made good.

Disability has given him the career drive which his childhood did not.

"If I hadn't become spinally injured I'd probably be a pipe fitter halfway up a building, freezing my nuts off right now," he says.

The chief executive of RADAR, you may surmise, is a candid, earthy sort of bloke. But he also has a rapier-like business mind which has just helped him secure a merger to stop the charity going under.

OK, running RADAR, which has 547 member groups and 24 staff, is hardly like heading Microsoft. But Mansell's progress has nevertheless been meteoric.

He left school with no qualifications, and yes, he really was a grave digger and a waiter. He also spent a year in the army.

He was spinally injured in a car crash in 1978. Before that he had been a muscular six foot two, and the change hurt like hell.

Calling a spade a spade



Tough at the top: Peter Mansell (left) with RADAR access officer Alun Francis

JAMIE FACER

"I had terrible psychological problems," he says. "And I had all the non-disabled assumptions that it was worse than death. Would I be able to shag? Would I be able to get work?"

There was crushing boredom, too. It led him to volunteer at a Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). He did a social policy degree and a certificate in management with the Open University. He also had management jobs at CAB and Scope.

In 1995 he became chief executive of the Spinal Injuries Association, where he quickly reversed plans for a costly new tier of management and

fundraised the charity out of financial troubles.

Mansell is something like a workhorse crossed with a racehorse. He starts work at 8am and takes no lunch hour. He gets things done quickly and chases the progress of staff.

But he must be a real puzzle to the army of middle-class chief executives and time-serving toffs who have found the charity sector such a happy hunting ground.

"If I invite people to lunch here I will give them fish and chips out of paper," he says. "A potential funder doesn't expect deep-pile carpets and a posh meal."

He also has tattoos all over his arms, stomach and legs and he admits: "I swear a lot, sometimes in the wrong places."

But this is not Biffa Bacon on wheels.

He is a family man, married to childhood friend Karen. He has two sons, Greg, 13, and Alex, ten, who go with him to see Arsenal.

He knows his stuff at work and he brims with ideas. His progressiveness, speed and belief in equality earn him admiration in the field.

When he started at RADAR in February, however, he inherited a financial crisis. And a new man coming in with little

option but to act swiftly was bound to cause antagonism, especially when he started talking about redundancies.

Neil Betteridge, former head of public affairs at RADAR and now head of public policy and campaigning at Arthritis Care says: "Peter's style was to throw out ideas to create immediate movement and then talk about refining the details. Some staff experienced problems when opening gambits were responded to as if they were a *fait accompli*."

Mansell can also offend people, he says. "Peter knows he can upset people personally and professionally. He likes high-risk dialogue because it creates movement."

"In the consultation over redundancies I put forward a plan saying what I would do if staff had no better ideas for making savings," Mansell responds.

He took their ideas on board, he says. But redundancies went ahead.

"For some people, getting alongside them and approaching issues softly is the right way," he says. "I hope I have an armoury of tactics, but my style is more blunt than the softer approach."

"Making people redundant was the worst part in all of this," he adds.

But lay-offs didn't work, and RADAR faced closure. Then the little-known but monied Enham Trust came up with a successful merger plan in October.

Mansell didn't sleep in the two weeks leading up to the agreement, he admits, and there were times when he wondered if RADAR could survive. He doesn't know if he would have taken the job if he had known what was ahead. But he admits: "I like the cut and chase and making something happen."

"The agreement will reduce our overheads and increase the amount of money we can put towards meeting disabled people's needs. There is no better feeling."

The irony is that Mansell does not now know what his own future will be. His fate will be decided once consultants have made recommendations and the merger takes place at the end of the financial year.

He expects further redundancies among senior staff.

But I suspect it will be a long time before we can start writing obituaries on the career of this grave digger from south London.

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Job training fails to meet demand

Residential training is a vital service that urgently needs more attention, says Robert Beckinsale



There are about 2.5 million unemployed disabled people in the UK. Of these about one million are not only capable of working to support themselves but really want to.

Although there have been successful benefits-to-employment programmes developed over the last 65 years, they still operate on a very small scale. Every week about

'How can the scale of residential training be increased to meet more than just 0.1 per cent of the potential demand?'

3,000 new names sign on for incapacity benefits and the reskilling programme which leads to employment is only available to about 1,000 people a year.

The arrangement at present is called residential training (RT) and is managed by the Residential Training Unit (RTU) based in the Government Office for the North East. The RTU contracts a number of providers to deliver "training for work" programmes for unemployed disabled people. All the clients are adults and are referred by the Employment Service. A large proportion of them are long-term unemployed.

My college, Queen Elizabeth's Foundation Training College (QEFTC) near Leatherhead, Surrey, and three other major providers – St Loyes College, Exeter, Portland College near Nottingham and Finchale College, Durham – offer courses catering for a wide spectrum of disabilities. Other centres provide specialist training for clients with visual impairment or extreme deafness.

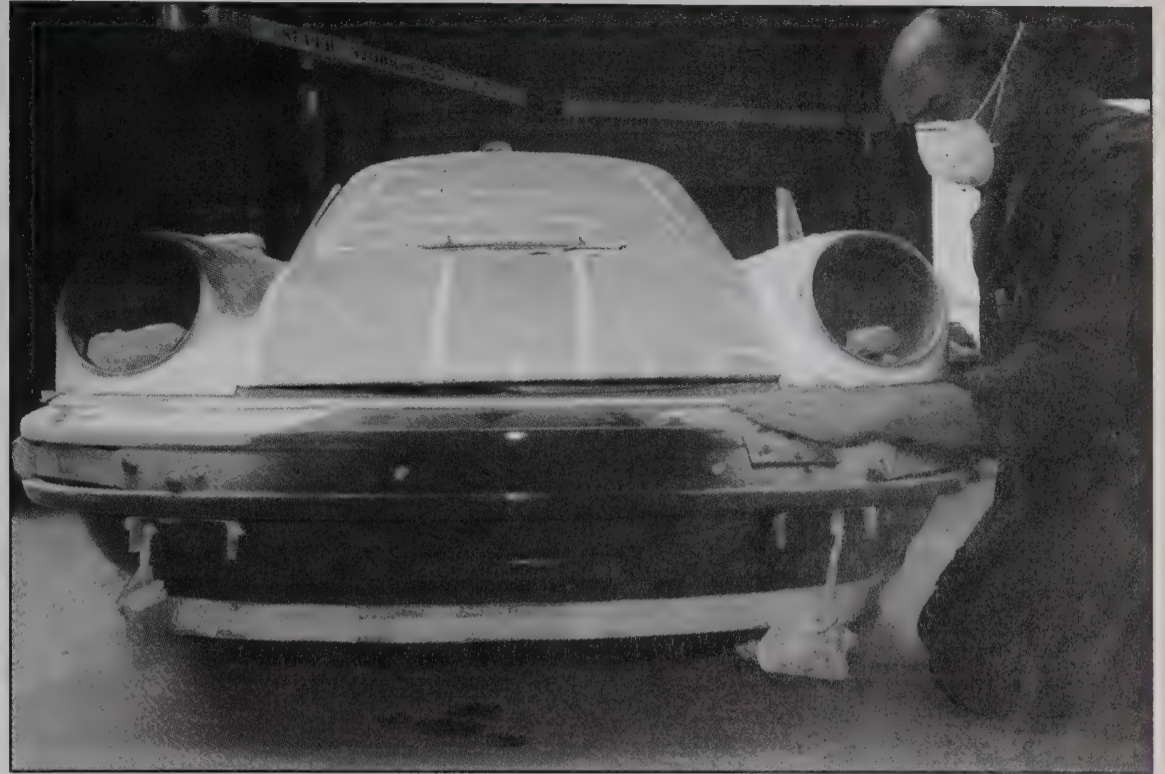
There are significant differences between the highly vocational courses offered in RT and courses in mainstream education. RT courses usually last between six months and a

year and focus directly on job markets. Our courses include accountancy, computer-aided design and domestic appliance servicing, all directly feeding a demand for employees.

RT providers also give a wide range of additional support, including 24-hour medical cover, physiotherapy, support for learning difficulties and dyslexia, signing, access to psychiatric help and counselling, and benefits advice.

Many of our clients have failed to connect with conventional education and, for some, our provision acts as a safety net where people address skill or education shortages seriously for the first time. Many middle-aged people get their first qualifications in the RT system and progress to jobs they could not have aspired to previously. At QEFTC trainees work with a team of advisers to get them an appropriate job – preferably the day after they leave college. Effective use is made of work experience placements where trainees can try out newly acquired skills. The work experience process also acts as a long interview and often leads to an offer of employment.

How successful is RT? Last year, 53 per cent of all trainees who completed an RT course were in employment or further



Working wonders: a trainee spray-paints a car as part of a residential vehicle refinishing course

education within six months. This is a remarkable achievement.

Why does it work? If you lose your job after an accident or illness, it is quite common that you also lose your home and partner as a result. In that case, there can be a definite advantage in getting away from your home environment to learn new skills and get yourself back on a career path. RT provides a supportive environment where people can begin to rebuild their lives and

regain confidence.

In the home environment, a disabled person often feels isolated. At QEFTC, trainees meet other people with the same or similar challenges. Peer groups form. The working and social interaction in RT provides the strongest lever to transfer from benefits to employment.

How can the scale of RT be increased from meeting only about 0.1 per cent of the potential demand to a level where it would have a more

significant impact?

At present, provision is an exemplary collaboration between the Government and the charitable sector. In general, the charitable sector provides capital (eg buildings), while the Government covers running costs via fee income.

But we need to take things further, and I think the only way of doing that is to set up a special government committee to launch a national debate. Robert Beckinsale is principal at QEFTC.

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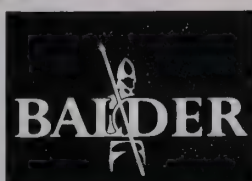
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Adopting four children changed family life for the better, says David Wharam

Back in the 1970s, my partner Lindsey and I agreed that I should have a vasectomy. You may be somewhat bemused to hear that the three children we then had were increased by another six.

To explain – over the intervening years we adopted two boys and two girls. The other two sadly died before we could adopt them (but that is another story).

This all started when Lindsey arrived home one night saying she had been nursing a boy with Down's syndrome whose parents couldn't look after him, could we? A year later she brought Ben home and we adopted him.

Four years later along came Ellen (now 16), then Lottie (now 12) and Stefen (now ten). Ben, Ellen and Lottie all have Down's syndrome and Stefen has cerebral palsy. Had they lived, Jonathan would have been 17 and April nine.

The three older "naturals", if pushed for their opinion, might have preferred things to have stayed as they were. But they were all very supportive once their new siblings started to arrive. Initially they worked hard to help their new brothers and sisters develop. Now they work even harder to get them to make mischief.

We knew at least something

'Lots of laughs, a few worries'



Family circle: (back l to r) David, Lindsey and Ben; (middle l to r) Ellen and Lottie; (front) Stefen

of the children before they came to us. But they have all come up with little twists to keep us alert – heart surgery for the girls, deafness and epilepsy for Ben; and Stefen, suffice to say, thinks of the hospital as home rather than our house.

We have had the usual battles with the authorities over schooling, equipment and support and we worry about their future, but the family seems to have its own ways of keeping things in perspective.

Although we have struggled to find a reliable means of communication for Stefen, he has an innate ability to blow raspberries in perfect context

during meetings with his school, social worker etc...

Adopting children with special needs has opened a whole new set of doors for us. People feel able to stop us in the street and give us their advice on our children. We now know that everybody's auntie has had "one of those" (vaguely pointing in the general direction of whoever happens to be in the pushchair). We are still not sure what became of all those the aunties had – oh, I wonder if we've got them now?

Over the years, we have learnt from our family. Stefen in particular has shown us the pure joy of wind and rain

blowing into his face; the total excitement of waiting until mother has lined up all his sterile equipment to administer his medicines and then tipping the whole lot on to the floor; and the sheer devastation that can be caused by his one functioning arm operating below parental eye level in a crowded supermarket. Stef and his Mum are easily located by following the trail of emptied shelves and elderly ladies rubbing their pinched bottoms.

It is difficult to stay cross with any of the children. They have all developed mechanisms for counter-attack – hangdog (Ben), clown (Lottie), vanish

(Ellen) and helpless laughter (Stef). Many problems arise from our inability to express ourselves clearly. Asking Ben, for example, to find my glasses (struggling to read a newspaper) is likely to result in his reappearing later with two wine glasses and a bottle of claret. On reflection, that's better than worrying about the Government's latest crisis.

Ellen and Lottie are now at mainstream secondary school, which is great – homework for Mum and Dad to do (sorry help with); no more sensible, reasonably priced clothes; packed lunches to be eaten on the way to school if acceptable or thrown into our neighbours' gardens if "disgusting".

One word of warning to parents of "special needs" children travelling to school. Unlike Ellen's father, do check where the bus is going. Recently Ellen did a tour of

'Stefen has an innate ability to blow raspberries in perfect context during meetings with his school, social worker etc...'

Norfolk before the puzzled driver asked "What school do you want?" Weeks after, "Just don't laugh!" was all a thunder-faced Ellen would say to anybody who enquired.

Funny incidents aside, we do feel very vulnerable regarding our children's education. Almost any criticism provokes a fear that the school does not want them. However unfounded that fear, it is worrying and, whatever your legal rights, once the staff are against you the placement just isn't going to work.

So a final tip. Try to ensure your child knows that playground language is not a good idea in class. Despite what their peers may say, telling teacher to "— off" could cause problems. As Basil Fawlty said, we mentioned it once but I think we got away with it.

Yes, in the past 20 years our children have given us lots of laughs, and a few worries and heartaches. Financially, we have had mixed fortunes. Lindsey gave up her career in nursing as the family expanded, but when in the last economic recession I was made redundant, the dear old DSS ensured that we survived rather better than most of my former colleagues.

Most of all, though, the children have given us just unreserved, unconditional love.

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DN's Warm Homes campaign is hotting up – and there's still time for you to join it

Warm Homes update



As autumn sets in and temperatures start to drop, disabled people under 60 who have severe mobility impairments are feeling the cold.

"My winters start in October," says Vivienne Payne, 42, from Loughborough. She has reflex sympathetic dystrophy. She keeps warm with "more clothing, more blankets, hot drinks. I don't open any windows or doors. I go to bed early to save on heating."

Mrs Paula Coles, 53, from Gosport, Hampshire, who has osteoarthritis and bad circulation, also wears extra

clothes and sits with a blanket round her. Her weekly income is £128.10. "My electricity bill was £353 for last winter. I just finished paying it in September."

The further north you go, the colder it gets. Dawn Smith, 44, from Boat-of-Garten, in the Highlands, says she hibernates in winter. "I am very immobile so I just stay in bed."

Like everyone else who has taken part in the DN Warm Homes survey, a £150 winter fuel payment – which pensioners aged over 60 receive – would make all the difference to her. "I could use my storage heaters when we expect a cold

day. Now I can't afford to take the risk."

"Over 200 people have replied to the survey so far, but we need thousands to make a real impact on the Government," says editor Mary Wilkinson.

More charities have pledged support: Arthritis Care, Carers National Association, Princess Royal Trust for Carers, RADAR, Scope, the Spinal Injuries Association and the disabled drivers' associations.

Lord (Jack) Ashley has written to Minister for Disabled People Margaret Hodge supporting a winter fuel payment and arguing "it will be money well spent."

Labour MP Dr Roger Berry will launch a cross-party Early Day Motion in the Commons in late October. Conservative MP Peter Bottomley and Liberal Democrat disability spokesman Andrew George will support it and many members of the All Party Disablement Group are expected to sign up too.

To add your name to the campaign, fill in the survey form and send it in by 10 November. No stamp required.

Warm Homes survey

Name

Address

Phone/fax number

Age

Disability

Benefits claimed

Weekly income (optional)

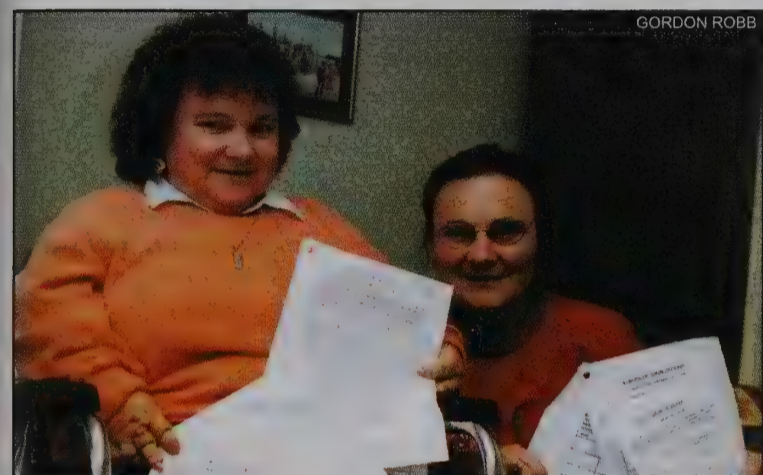
Can you afford to keep warm in winter?

How do you keep warm now?

Would a winter fuel payment help?

How?

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Fuelling the campaign: Margaret Lees (left) of Kilmarnock Forum on Disability, and mum Helen Collins, have gathered over 2,000 signatures

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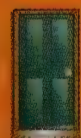
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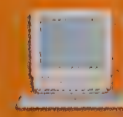
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Letters to the Editor



ILLUSTRATIONS: CLARE CURTIS

Don't let Mary die in vain

Tom Shakespeare says bioethics "problems" are irresolvable and depend on your personal, religious and ethical beliefs (DN, October).

I disagree. Bioethics are resolvable if you believe in human rights and the right to life regardless of what someone is perceived to be able to do with or without support.

For me, the Mary and Jodie judgement has legalised selection. The doctors say they can only save one child, which has resulted in the twins being pitted against each other. The child who is nearest to being "normal" will be given the right to life, in this case Jodie.

There is no agreement between St Mary's Hospital, Manchester, and Great Ormond Street Hospital, London, on how long Mary and Jodie could live together – anything from six months to two years and maybe more. This may allow Mary the chance to grow strong enough to have a heart and lung

transplant. Great Ormond Street staff have said they do not know any infant who has had a heart and lung transplant at such a young age.

Performing an untested operation has never stopped doctors if it is the only chance the patient has to live. If Mary was given the transplant, at least she would not have died in vain and would have been given the chance of life.

I feel there has been no real effort to keep Mary alive. She has been described as so intellectually and physically impaired that the medical profession believe she wouldn't enjoy her life.

Anyone interested in signing a petition for the Jodie and Mary Right to Life campaign or joining a weekly vigil in Manchester should contact Steve, tel: 0161 797 2121, Kate, minicom: 0161 797 2121, or clair, e-mail: agicrip@hotmail.com. Simone Aspis London NW2

They done me wrong

The news story about major companies, members of the Employers' Forum on Disability, not knowing how many disabled workers they employ (DN, September) echoes my own experience.

A qualified psychologist, currently studying for a Ph.D, I have lost count of the jobs I have applied for. Being a wheelchair user, I have found many prejudices, even among charities.

Initially I completed the monitoring form which always stated that the interview panel would not be aware of disability. But I seemed to be getting nowhere. On the first application form where I

omitted my disability, I was given an interview. When I encountered six steps, I was told "We never considered that anyone would be disabled." This job was advising parents who had disabled children. Needless to say, I didn't get the job.

My husband phoned to ask how many disabled staff they employ. They could not give an answer. He asked how many ethnic minorities they employ and straight away the answer was nine.

I'm not casting aspersions on ethnic minorities, but what I am saying is that disabled people should have equal rights. Marie Smith e-mail

Coping with hidden disabilities

For the past few years I have been invisibly disabled and there are times when I long for some formally recognised indication to support my requests for help. My spinal problems make it impossible to lift or carry, and pushing or pulling heavy doors is very painful. Looking fit as I do, my requests are often met with scepticism.

In contrast, my very visibly

severely disabled husband finds doors are opened for him before he asks and help is freely offered, usually with a smile.

Rebecca Goldsmith London SW11

I feel very annoyed at Paul Green and the comments he made about fibromyalgia (FMS).

As we are trying to make the Government, some medical professionals and the general public more aware of FMS, his comment, "I don't want a cure" makes a mockery of us all.

Most people with a chronic illness would give anything to find a cure that would stop them being in pain every day. Sue Gardner e-mail, Norfolk

Ooh for a good loo

In DN June, Naidex was criticised for no hoist or changing areas in the "disabled toilets".

Never in all our travels in the last nine years of my husband's spinal injury have we ever seen a toilet with a hoist in it. Toilets with or without waste bins and toilets with various kinds of baby change, but a toilet with a hoist? I count us lucky to find a clean, sweet-smelling, well-lit toilet with grab-rails. Don't blame one organisation. Apply your remarks fairly to 99.9 per cent of all councils and businesses. Glenys Chew Bury, Lancashire

Cycle network slammed

As a severely deaf person, I find cyclists extremely worrying since I am unable to hear them coming up behind me on the pavement in spite of two high-powered hearing aids. The acceptance of cycling on pavements is very much to be regretted. Mary Priddey Totnes, Devon

Have you got something to say? Send your letters to the editor Mary Wilkinson, Disability Now, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW, minicom: 020 7619 7332, fax: 020 7619 7331, e-mail: editor@disabilitynow.org.uk, or visit the website at: www.disabilitynow.org.uk



No convenience on Virgin train

Ten years ago when I took part in disability demonstrations to raise awareness of issues concerning disabled people, we disability politicians had a t-shirt which said "piss on pity".

I travelled recently on a Virgin train and, as a wheelchair user, reserved the accessible seat provided on intercity trains. Imagine my horror when I found there was no accessible toilet adjacent to the seat, which they used to have when it was British Rail.

Now we have the Disability Discrimination Act which legislates that goods and services should not discriminate against disabled people.

So now no "pissing" at all on Virgin Trains if you are a wheelchair user. Look at the law, Richard Branson. Victoria Waddington London SW2

PC pulse

By Dan Batten
Dark knight

In his infinite wisdom, Australian Olympics Minister Michael Knight decided that paralympians don't want to compete under the same burning Olympic rings as their non-disabled counterparts, and duly removed them before the Paralympic games started. Hands up who'd like to extinguish Mr Knight's flame right now?

Hear-say

A recent study in Germany has shown that blind people can understand speech far quicker than sighted people, and that areas at the rear of the brain normally used for sight are used for information processing. Is this really surprising, considering how much blind people rely on their ears?

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Fun rather than informative

This year's Motor Show boasted 69 new launches and lots of cars to dream about, says Douglas Campbell

The approach by car to the Motor Show at the National Exhibition Centre near Birmingham can be a congestion nightmare, but I was there on press day, when numbers are strictly limited.

This venue always seems to have the most helpful support staff. They made me welcome at the control point and quickly directed me to disabled parking bays near an entrance. Inside they just couldn't have been more helpful. Other venues really could learn a lot from here, but perhaps it is something bred in to the people of the West Midlands.

There were over 1,000 cars, including 69 debuts, with a total of 326 exhibitors displaying their products.

It was good to see that the needs of disabled people had been considered by many stand designers. A long, gentle ramp gave access to the upper level of the Ford stand and many exhibitors had simply decided not to have an upper level.

Unfortunately, some stands still left DN's intrepid motoring correspondent unable to access the free drinks and eats on press day, but they know who they are and they will probably not feature in this report!

At long last many stands had ramps as well as the more steeply sloped plinth edges,



DN's motoring correspondent

Douglas Campbell, executive director of the Disabled Drivers' Association, has taken over as

many of which were potential traps for visitors with impaired vision. Maps of the show pointed out the special routes for wheelchair users and paths that were not suitable because of steps or very steep slopes.

For the first time the Ford Motor Company had taken a complete hall. This made clear just how large a part of the motor industry is controlled by just one company. It was showing the new Mondeo for the first time, as well as old favourites ranging from the long-established Fiesta to the more recently introduced Focus.

Prominent at the back of the hall was Ford MAGIC, where visitors could access the new information service for disabled motorists. A feature of this area was the accessible Ford Focus estate featuring not only hand controls but also a hoist at the back, with a scooter neatly stowed without the back seat needing to be folded down. Ford, tel: 01277 253000.



Hanging around: a VW Beetle, just one of the many suspended cars Douglas managed to avoid

Vauxhall was the only other manufacturer that appeared to have dedicated staff and an enquiry point for their disabled customers. They were showing the new Corsa. Provided the price is right this should be popular with Motability customers. Unlike many new cars the Corsa really does look like the previous model. There are many changes, but they are alterations rather than completely new designs.

Vauxhall was also

showing a Zafira with a substantial motorised wheelchair and hoist neatly fitted behind the rear seats. Vauxhall, tel: 01582 721122.

The Peugeot 406 estate caught my eye with its easy, flat-floor access at the rear. At one time the Vauxhall Astra was the only estate offering this useful feature, but it can now be found in many estates of this size. Peugeot, tel: 024 7689 4000.

The "smart" car appeared in many colours, including an eye-

catching Union Jack design with a sparkly finish. Although this very compact city car is attractive, it is still only available in left-hand drive, which is generally considered less safe on UK roads. Tel: 01243 828608.

On the Toyota stand the MR2 sports car caught my attention. It is surprisingly good value for money and has looks that would definitely be the envy of the neighbours, but these were not enough to



Dream machine: Douglas likes the Toyota MR2 but laments the lack of wheelchair space in the back



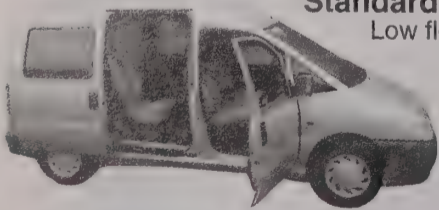
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Flash Ford: Maurice Stockton and Jean Griffiths with the Mondeo

compensate for the lack of space for a wheelchair. Never mind, it does no harm to dream a little! *Toyota, tel: 01737 768585.*

There was an amazing number of cars suspended on massive poles or cables. After a while I took no notice when I found myself under a dangling Volkswagen Beetle.

Main attraction on the Volkswagen stand was the new Passat, making its UK debut. It will be available in January. Their Polo estate and saloon were on show, with freshly designed interiors to add to their competitive prices. *Volkswagen, tel: 01908 679121.*

Jaguar's stand featured the Jaguar Collection where you could buy Jaguar Racing merchandise, including T-shirts, polo shirts and even the delightful Jaguar Racing bear. *Jaguar, tel: 024 7640 2121.*

Followers of the company that made those truly popular cars, the Mini and the Metro, were disappointed. Originally Austin and Morris, then BMC and later Rover, the company finally ended up as part of German car maker BMW. Recently BMW broke up the company and British investors bought most of Rover. Apparently the new owners claim the Motor Show is not a cost-effective way to advertise and, as a result, they were not to be seen anywhere, except in the car park.

The new Mini is, of course, to be made by BMW, who kept that part of the business. It is not yet available but was on show in Hall 6. As this was the most remote part of the whole show, I never actually saw it. *BMW, tel: 01344 426565.*

In the the Star Studio, sponsored by Virgin Cars, original dream car drawings by more than 50 celebrities were on display. The designs included an amazing range of dreams, including an almost circular car with couches and video screens all round.

A quarter of a million Lego pieces had been used to build a life-size model of the Formula 1 Silver Champion model.

Sega were displaying their latest console game, Metropolis Street Racer, for all the kids – including very big ones.

Halls 6, 7 and 8 seemed



rather detached from the rest of the show. In Hall 8 visitors had a rare chance to see examples of British automotive design in the Century of British Sports Cars feature. This showed a cross-section of sports cars from the last 100 years, ranging from a 1902 Napier through the Jaguar E-type to the supercars of today.

As ever, the Motor Show was a great opportunity to see much of what is around, but many DN readers will have found it entertaining rather than informing. Mobility Roadshow-type events will usually provide much better options.

Perhaps Rover was, after all, correct in saving the huge amount of money that attendance would have cost. *www.motorshow.co.uk*



Flying the flag: the smart car attracts attention but is still only available in left-hand drive



Impressive access: Douglas and Ian McAllister, head of Ford Britain, try the Ford Focus out for size

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Film

Simon Minty

"Dogme 95" is a set of rules designed to "rescue cinema" from the predominance of Hollywood popcorn films. It demands the use of hand-held cameras, and bans *genre* storylines and working to a formal script. *Julien Donkey-Boy* adopts these rules with gusto.

The absence of a detailed script meant substantial improvisation from the cast of *Julien*, allowing the story to go wherever their imagination took them. The film frequently disappears up its own *avant-garde* posterior and left me slumping more heavily on mine.

Julien is excruciatingly disjointed and inaccessible. Despite its intentions of

depicting reality, it achieves the reverse, appearing more incredible than some Hollywood blockbusters.

My regrettable apathy meant I nearly missed some interesting aspects of disability. Julien, sporting menacing and inexplicable gold false teeth, has schizophrenia and works as an attendant at a blind school. The disjointed storyline may be a metaphor of his muddled life, but compared to the existence of his dysfunctional family, he seems more stable.

There are glimpses of insightful disability characterisation; we eavesdrop on the blind students and there is a positive-thinking thalidomide magician.

Ultimately, *Julien* reeks of a self-absorbed director and seems to care little about engaging the audience. *Limited release in October.*



Art

Libby Cross

Stafford's Shire Hall Gallery is showing *Pride and Prejudice*, an exploration of disability and difference.

The work on show is laced with humour and serious comment. *The Usual Reaction* (above) by Colin Marsh, in which a wheelchair user is pictured in a line of men at a urinal, perfectly catches the mixed feelings of curiosity and embarrassment with which the able-bodied regard the bodily functions of disabled people.

Embarrassment led historically to many disabled people being excluded from family photographs, but in her compelling life-size portraits Jude Woods has produced images of fully-rounded and memorable individuals. *Mik*

and *Simon* linger most clearly in the mind's eye.

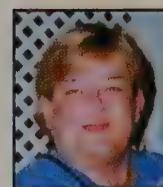
There are disturbing images too – Tony Bland's *Landscape with Reclining Figure* with its stormy, purple sky; and *The Psychiatrist*, a hunched figure with snake-like hair, is like something out of a nightmare, inspired by Tony's experiences of mental illness.

Steve Jones' work is difficult for tactile visitors to resist; *Ten Years Gone* uses textured media and a ragged road map to depict childhood journeys to hospital. I watched visitors, clearly intrigued, move closer, peering at the map and tapping when they saw a place name they recognised. Distracted by what was familiar, they were drawn into the unknown world of the disabled child.

This is a rewarding and welcoming exhibition. One to visit if you can. *Until 4 November, tell/minicom: 01785 278345.*

Television

Jane Shepherd



Jane Shepherd, who has wide experience of radio and

TV reporting, researching and presenting, has taken over as DN's TV reviewer.

Secret History: Children of the Iron Lung (Channel 4, 27 September) relived the horror of the 1950s polio epidemics using "Mr Cholmondeley-Warner"-type footage telling doctors what to look out for, and old newsreels asking *IS ENOUGH BEING DONE?* Did the Government drag its feet over the Salk vaccine? Forty years on, who cares? Surely there is a greater need to explore the implications *now* for polio survivors.

Your Voice, Your Vote's final programme (Channel 4, 24 September), presented by Simone Aspis, was excellent. Mike O'Brien, Home Office Minister, agreed that complicated voting forms were a problem for lots of people – not just those with a learning difficulty. As Simone said "cut out the crap." Quite.

The engaging Chris Moon appeared on *Parkinson* (BBC1, 7 October). Having lost an arm and leg clearing landmines, he's since run countless marathons and succeeded in making us couch potatoes feel inadequate. But well done anyway.

Remember *Your Life in Their Hands*? This phrase popped into my head during *Why Doctors Make Mistakes* (Channel 4, Tuesdays, October), a series which included frank interviews with doctors admitting mistakes. You may have heard the adage "see one, do one, teach one" – but if the doctor's never even seen one, you're in *big* trouble. Q. How many disabled contestants have you seen on game shows? A. Very few, if any. Y? Because we can't get on to the stools.

So it was good to see Edie, a disabled contestant on *Dicing with Debt* (C4, 11 October). Students answer trivia questions and the winner gets their student debts paid off. Edie didn't win, but, in time-honoured tradition, she didn't go away empty-handed. She won a phone, a bed and a TV licence. What more can a girl ask for?

Festival

Paul Darke

In October Wolverhampton held the *Deaf Film and Television Festival*, the fifth one since 1994. It was a roaring success, with the three days of screenings, discussions and workshops all booked out.

Channel 4, as ever the *bête noir* of disability arts, was at the heart of a session called *The New Deaf Way Forward*. The debate concerned a series or two coming to our screens in February, aimed at 18-25 year olds and made by a couple of

non-deaf production companies. One suspects irony will be high on the agenda.

Wolverhampton Art Gallery* had an excellent exhibition, *Look Out: Art/Society/Politics* (until 11 November), linking well with the deaf festival. It had one of the most beautiful artworks ever to include an Invacar. Catch the exhibition on tour in Liverpool (Bluecoat Gallery), London (Pitshanger Manor Gallery) and Ipswich (Wolsey Gallery), until March 2001.

There was plenty of debate, excitement and tension: the stuff of life. Roll on the sixth festival – I can't wait.

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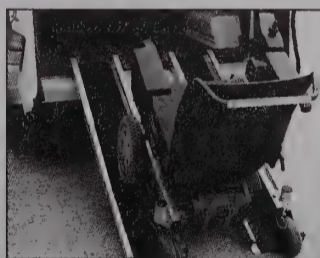
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Some nice work – if you can get in

For Adam Reynolds, the Royal Academy's *Apocalypse* adds public insult to artistic licence

After last year's *Sensation!* exhibition the Royal Academy now presents *Apocalypse, Beauty and Horror in Contemporary Art*.

The exhibition sets out to reflect "aspects of the richness, beauty, horror and diversity of the world today."

The show ends with Jeff Koons, presumably cast as the Antichrist with his kitsch monstrosities. He is preceded by the Chapman brothers' *Hell*, an impressive if puerile vision with nine big glass cases of blood-strewn landscapes filled with thousands of tiny gory plastic figures. A shame they are set too high to see properly from a wheelchair.

The other works' connection to the theme is more incidental, giving the show a disturbing but disjointed feeling. Apart from Mariko Mori, with her gorgeously unsettling *Dream Temple*, the other artists use a wide range of media, including film and installation. They are all from western Europe or the US, virtually all men in their thirties and forties – so much for diversity!

But what led me to the gallery in the first place were the stories of extremely restricted access to the first room. As an artist, I went prepared to defend the artist's absolute authority over their own work. As an access adviser,



Made to reflect: Jeff Koons' kitsch *Balloon Dog* (left) and *Moon*

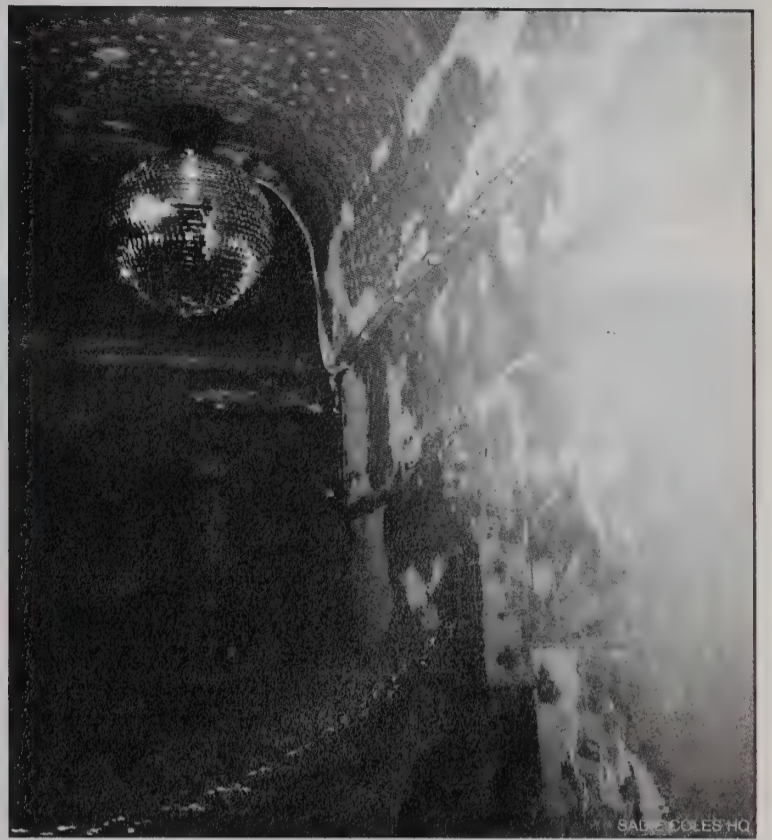
I was prepared to be very critical of the Academy's responsibility to present that work as accessibly as possible.

The work in question is part of the artist Gregor Schneider's house in which for 12 years he has been adding layer upon layer of false walls, doors and windows until it has become cramped and disorienting – instant claustrophobia. To enter you have to crawl on hands and knees through a small gap. Moving around inside is (apparently) pretty restrictive, particularly with a lot of other people, though perhaps you would be glad of the company. I did not get inside, but was ungraciously let in through the alternative side door.

Clearly the work is wholly

inaccessible to a great number of visitors and not just disabled people. You have to question whether this makes it legitimate to include in the show. I would not exclude it just on these grounds (though I know many would disagree). I say this because I think it is crucial that artists have the licence to do in their work what is not normally acceptable in everyday life. They must be able to defend their actions, but the freedom to question convention is a key part of their usefulness.

The Royal Academy chose to include an element in the show which they knew would be inaccessible. Their blurb talks



Exclusive art: Gregor Schneider's *Cellar* is inaccessible to many

about the artist's intention to disturb, confuse or oppress the visitor but does not mention excluding them (or make apology). From this I must presume that we are simply unimportant to them. What is more, they placed the work at the entrance, making it impossible to avoid.

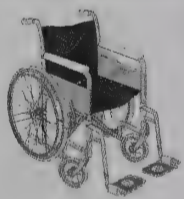
This is not the artist being

provocative, it is the exhibition organisers. In my book, their job is not crassly to mimic the artists they show but to bring their work to a wider public. Their failure to do so is an insult to the public and, love them or hate them, to the artists on show.

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Janet Larcher reports on new developments and product launches in the world of communication aids

It's good to talk

It has been an eventful year for manufacturers of equipment and software for people with severe communication difficulties.

The Communication Matters conference at Lancaster University in mid-September gave an outstanding opportunity to catch up with the news as well as enjoy lectures and workshops by people from this country and abroad.

This annual conference also has the largest UK exhibition of equipment and software for people with severe communication difficulties, and many manufacturers and suppliers took the opportunity to launch new products.

During the year **Mardis**, maker of **Eclipse** and **Orac** communication aids, ceased trading and concern was expressed at the conference that existing users of these devices would be left without support. Fortunately, **Morphonics** – a new company founded by the engineers who originally designed these communication aids – has stepped in to supply and continue to support them. They were also offering a glimpse of a new dynamic screen communication aid that they are soon to bring to the market and is expected to be cheaper than similar machines. *Morphonics, tel: 01524 848373.*

In June **Cambridge Adaptive Communication (CAC)** merged activities with **Possum Controls**. This could create a very powerful company in the field of electronic assistive technology, since they now have knowledge and experience of both augmentative and alternative communication and environmental controls. It is hoped that the established network of Possum field engineers will soon be able to give local, quick and efficient service on both companies' products. *CAC, tel: 01296 719736.*

This is obviously the year when environmental control companies get into the communication aid field. **RSL Steeper** launched **Iconspeak**, based on a palm-sized PC. Vocabularies suited to young children, teenagers and adults are available in **Picture Communication Symbols**, **Rebus** and **Clipart**. *From £980, RSL Steeper, tel: 01634 297010.*

Vocaflex is a development of the **Spokesman** range of communication aids. **Spokesman** is available in five different models, each offering



Tough talking: TechTalk and TechSpeak claim to be very robust

a fixed number of locations – 1, 2, 4, 8 or 16. **Vocaflex** can be quickly and easily changed between 4, 8 and 16 locations simply by changing its special type of keyguard. All locations can be available as single-action or two-key sequences with speech recording time of ten or 20 seconds. Speech quality from these devices is excellent. *From £995, Toby Churchill, tel: 01223 576117.*

Vocab+ is software which allows the user to access the word they want from a combination of word banks and a prediction typing system. The initial screen offers basic words, letters and word endings. If the required word is not available, its initial letter is selected. If the word is still not available, the user must select the next letter of the desired word. Letters and words can be selected by switch, mouse or keyboard. The suppliers claim that 85 per cent of words used are available within two selections and that users experience a 40 per cent speed improvement over normal word-processing software. The

software is available on many PCs, tablet and palmtop computers running under Windows and Windows CE. *From £400, Vocab Voice Systems International, tel: 01476 550391.*

New vocabulary systems are available for **Dynavox**, **Dynamyte** and **Clicker4**.

Sunrise Medical has licensed the **CALLtalk** and **Expressions** for Daily Living vocabulary structures for its **Dynavox** and **Dynamyte** ranges.

CALLtalk is designed for primary aged schoolchildren who are anticipated to develop full language abilities and make the transition to literacy, although it will also be useful for older learners who are moving more slowly towards these goals. Pages have 35 buttons. **Expressions** for Daily Living is designed for adolescents and pages have 54 buttons.

All four levels of **Quickfire**, based on infield dynamic vocabularies, are now available for **Clicker4** from **Crick Software**. *From £30, Crick, tel: 01604 671691. Sunrise*



Variety Club, the greatest children's charity in the world, welcomes applications to its **Easy Riders Scheme**, for assistance with funding mobility aids, such as wheelchairs, buggies and trikes, on behalf of financially disadvantaged children with special needs under 19 years of age.

To apply, please contact the Wheelchairs Co-ordinator at: **Variety Club**, 93 Bayham Street, London NW1 0AG. Telephone 020 7428 8100. Fax 020 7428 8111. E-mail: wheelchairs@varietyclub.org.uk

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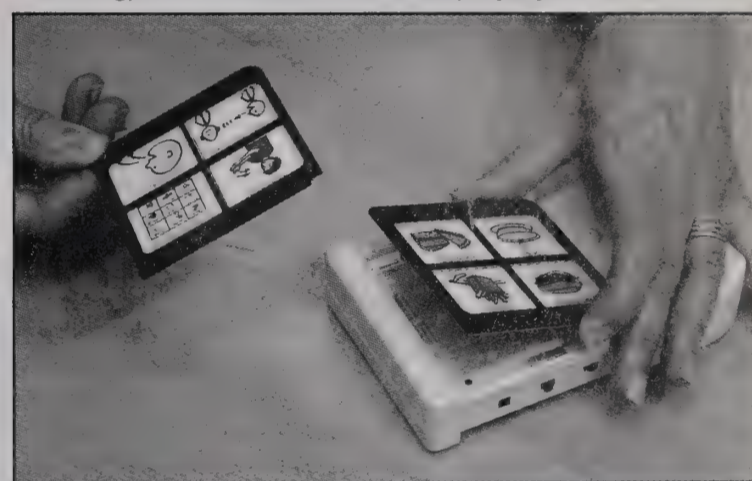
Widgit has launched **Inter_Comm**, a software package which allows symbol users to e-mail anyone anywhere in the world in symbols – and if they are English, French, German or Portuguese-speaking it can also provide appropriate text to accompany the symbols. This provides e-mail access for people with learning difficulties whose understanding of reading and writing is limited unless the text has symbol support. A research project has also been launched to explore the impact of e-mailing with symbols on students and adults with learning difficulties. *From £40, Widgit, tel: 01926 885303.*

TechTalk and **TechSpeak**, light and inexpensive devices, are now supplied by **Inclusive Technology**. Both aids are

claimed to be waterproof and very robust. **TechTalk** has 8 locations and is available in 6, 8 or 12 levels, thereby giving up to 96 messages each of four seconds' duration (from £295). **TechSpeak** has 32 locations and comes with 2, 4 or 6 levels, with each message being of up to two seconds' duration (from £345). *Inclusive Technology, tel: 01457 819790.*

Over the next three years all teachers will have the chance of training on the use of communication technology within the curriculum. Training for special educational needs teachers started in earnest this term. For information on approved training providers, teachers should consult the **Red Book** sent to all schools this year.

Janet Larcher is an independent consultant on microtechnology aids for people with disabilities.



Sounds good: the Spokesman range gives excellent speech quality

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Stories without sweeteners



Telling Our Own Stories is a remarkable collection of works by disabled

people and their families. It offers a striking insight into the lives of a diverse group of people via prose, poetry and artwork.

Contributors offer us Stories from the Past, Stories of People and the System, and Stories of Personal Reflection. The first

section is particularly harrowing, bringing home the stark experience of disability in years gone by.

This collection is published with an emphasis on the "disabling environment", although many contributors are non-disabled parents who had no experience of disability before their children were born. In this respect the collection is a touching mix of pieces which illustrate disability's social origins and the thoughts of ordinary, often ill-prepared

individuals who sometimes felt themselves to be floundering.

Whilst a sense of frustration is often clear, nowhere is there any idea of triumph over tragedy or a saccharine presentation of disability. What comes across is an iron will to rise above a system which refuses to recognise disabled people as individuals.

One poem *Why won't my Words Work?* talks movingly of a parent's attempt to make the local authority see their child as an individual rather than

simply a child with "needs".

There are beautiful pieces by disabled children and their non-disabled friends, showing how children often see beyond difference. Disabled adults and young people are given a voice too and speak frankly about their hopes and how, too often, these have been frustrated.

This book left me feeling respect for the parents and children. A must-read.

Rachel Wilson

£8, *Parents with Attitude*, PO Box 1727, Sheffield S11 8WS

Book news

• *Good Times, Bad Times – Women with Learning Difficulties Telling Their Stories* is a collection of thoughts on what it means to be a woman with a learning disability today. £9.50 (plus five per cent p&p).

Send a cheque or postal order to BILD Publications, Plymbridge Distributors, Estover Road, Plymouth PL6 7PZ.

• Penguin Audiobooks has launched new CD titles, including Chris Stewart's *Driving over Lemons*. Edit points have been inserted every five minutes, making it much easier to find your place. £9.99.

• *Touch, Touch and Touch Again*, a joint project by Sense and the British Deaf History Society, looks at experiences of deafblind people in education. It covers the lives of James Mitchell, born in 1796, who died aged 73, and Hannah Lamb, who died aged seven in 1808. There is also information about education at the Bath School for the Deaf and the Glasgow Blind Asylum. £5.50 (plus £1 p&p). Send cheques payable to the British Deaf History Society to BDHS Publications, 52 Hillhouse Road, Streatham Common, London SW16 2AQ.

Take a stroll with society's lost soul



A Lone Walk by Gul Y Davis is a powerful story about a man's bid for freedom in a

world that has smothered him.

Flashbacks and narratives build to describe the world of Wil Shaw, now discharged after ten years of psychiatric care.

This is a journey through the twilight of life. Wil is not

confused; he is removed from everyday values of social functioning and on the brink of disconnecting totally.

He has had the humanity knocked out of him. What is left is a remote observer who takes us on a chilling tour of the asylum and what it is like to be locked in. "Rooms were strange things. If one could come and go, put pictures up, put carpets down, they were a space to call one's own, to enjoy being alone. Lock someone in, then the room

becomes a cell. The walls closed in, the smell stifled, the isolation pained. Doors no longer kept the others out but kept me in: and yes, so easily, I could have let myself scream, scream with the woman out there."

But Gul Y Davis is able also to find the chinks in the armour, the warmth in the snow. He has the skill to describe the hopeless with a poetic intensity that engages.

Is it authentic, true to the experience? Well, it evokes

familiar sensations for me, certainly took me back to my own experience of psychiatric admissions. The cold mind of an estranged young man and his grim surroundings are well described.

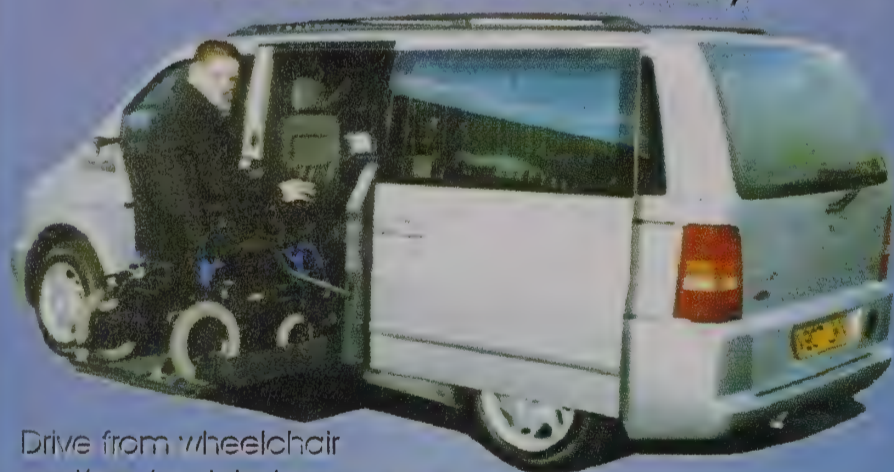
I liked this book and am keen to read it again so I can really absorb the rich descriptions of a lone walk in a society that is ambivalent about the recovery of its lost souls.

Rufus May

£6.99, Tindal Street Press

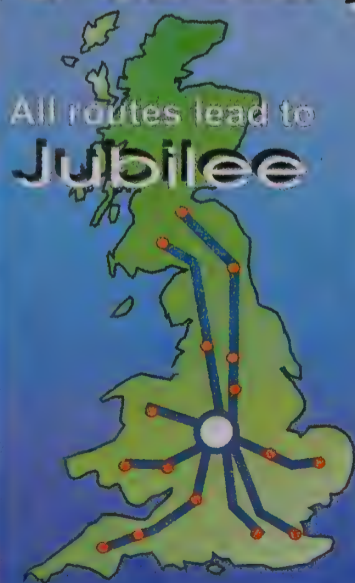
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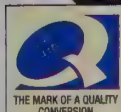
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Mike Hurdiss urges severely disabled people to claim Severe Disablement Allowance before it is abolished for new claimants in April 2001

Claim SDA while you can



spouse or partner you may get an extra £24.20 per week, and if you have children you may get an addition of £9.85 for the first child and £11.35 for each subsequent child. Your partner's earnings or income may affect payment of these adult and child additions.

As well as the basic rates and additions for dependents there are three age-related additions. If you are under 40 when you start claiming you get an extra £14.20, if you are 40-49 £9 and 50-59 £4.50.

If you are already on Income Support (IS), you may not get any extra money by claiming SDA, but it could still be worthwhile claiming it in case your circumstances change. If you are already getting IS and think you may be entitled to SDA, seek advice.

You may qualify if you meet

all the following conditions:

- you are 16 or over but under 65;
- you have been incapable of work for at least 28 weeks (just over six months) and continue to be incapable of work; and
- the Benefits Agency finds you "severely disabled".

Young people aged between 16 and 20 do not have to show that they are "severely disabled". Young people often miss out on SDA and other benefits like IS because of the complexity of current rules. You should seek advice. This is an area where the Government will be increasing provision, with young people who would otherwise have claimed SDA being able to access the more generous Incapacity Benefit from April 2001.

To be "severely disabled" the Benefits Agency must assess you as being at least 80 per cent

disabled. This is a misleading term as you can be more than 100 per cent disabled.

You automatically count as being 80 per cent disabled if:

- you are registered blind;
- you get the highest rate of the Disability Living Allowance care component; or
- you have already been assessed as 80 per cent disabled for Industrial Injuries Benefit or War Pension.

A Benefits Agency doctor will decide how disabled you are if you are not automatically treated as 80 per cent disabled.

The law sets out specific percentage figures for some disabilities. So, if one of the following applies to you, your assessment should be at least 80 per cent:

- loss of both hands;
- loss of a hand and a foot;
- double amputation of legs;
- loss of sight to such an extent that you are unable to do work for which eyesight is essential;
- severe facial disfigurement;
- absolute deafness;
- forequarter or hindquarter amputation;
- amputation through shoulder joint; or
- amputation at hip.

Other guidance is not as specific, but if one of the following applies to you, your assessment will probably be at least 80 per cent:

- getting chest pain when resting or after walking a very short distance;
- having frequent, painful bleeding in major joints due to

haemophilia;

- mental health problems causing unexpected, irrational or dangerous behaviour;
- dementia;
- severe learning disability;
- average hearing loss, at 1, 2 and 3 kHz frequencies, of at least 87 decibels in both ears, taking into account a hearing aid if you normally wear one; or
- visual acuity after spectacle correction of 6/60 or worse in both eyes.

There are many other conditions that could mean that you are 80 per cent

'The abolition of SDA could mean 16,000 disabled people a year losing out. If you claim it now you can continue to receive it after April 2001'

disabled. If you are not sure whether you would pass this test, seek further advice or make a claim anyway.

To claim, phone your local Benefits Agency office and ask for form SDA1. Alternatively, you can make a claim over the phone, tel: 0800 441144.

In some areas of the UK, you may be asked to attend an interview with a personal adviser to discuss prospects of work before you get benefit. *Mike Hurdiss is a benefits policy officer at Scope. He is unable to enter into individual correspondence.*

For a factsheet prepared by the Disability Benefits Consortium (DBC) with more information on SDA and how to claim it, contact the Royal National Institute for the Blind, tel: 0845 766 9999 or visit Scope's website: www.scope.org.uk. Alternatively, ring the benefits enquiry line for people with disabilities, tel: 0800 882 200, minicom: 0800 243 355. *Thanks to the DBC for use of its SDA factsheet.*

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You can bank on a good job

Banking has become a dynamic sector to work in, Sally Brown finds

The traditional view of banking as a rather staid "job for life" no longer reflects the diverse and rapidly changing world of modern financial services.

Banking is in a state of flux. Many traditional names have merged and been joined on the high street by former building societies. With the advent of call centres and the internet the branch network is under threat. Many "back-room" jobs have disappeared, and customer service and sales expertise are increasingly important.

But there are still career opportunities, according to Peter Knight, senior manager of human resources development at HSBC.

"We are recruiting at different levels throughout the organisation, both for experienced people and new starters," he says.

Positions range from clerical staff to branch or area managers. Salaries start at around £7,000 a year for clerical officers, rising to £18-20,000 for a branch manager



Mark Berrisford-Smith

out of London or £30,000 plus within London. Area managers can earn anything from £60,000. Graduates can expect to start at around £22,000.

Each bank has its own recruitment system, and posts are advertised locally and nationally. Opportunities are available for applicants with customer service or sales experience. There are often special paths for people with A levels, and graduates with a 2(ii) degree in any subject can apply for "fast-track" senior management training. On-the-job qualifications are available from the Chartered Institute of Bankers.

The main high-street banks have equal opportunities policies and several, including HSBC and Barclays, are members of the Employers'

Forum on Disability, which promotes employment for disabled people.

But according to Doris Henderson, national equality officer for the banking and finance union UNIFI (formerly BIFU), it can be difficult for disabled people to find work. "In general, the industry is quite hard for disabled people to work in, both in terms of the jobs and accessibility of premises. That's going to change, but not quickly enough."

David Stephenson, 44, is telephone support clerk to the student business officers at a Barclays branch in Portsmouth.

David, who has been blind since birth, answers telephone queries and uses a Braille and speech-adapted computer. He trained as a telephonist at a Royal National Institute for the Blind college and got his first job at Barclays in Gosport, Hampshire, in 1980.

"I was chosen because of my college education and because of my presentation," says David. "Barclays also had a reputation for employing visually impaired people."

David believes different skills are needed nowadays. "At one time banks were looking for someone with personality who could deal with customers. In the past five years it's become more organisational ability, and the ability to promote yourself."

David admits that he has sometimes found his adaptive technology has not kept pace with IT changes at the bank.

Mark Berrisford-Smith, 42, who is blind, is senior economist with HSBC in London. He has experienced similar problems.

"The only constraints I have felt resulted from technology," he says. "Fortunately, I know what I require and can tap into support if I need it."

Mark joined HSBC after completing a degree in



Changing times: David Stephenson says bank workers now need organisation and self-promotion skills

economics. He worked his way up to one of the most senior positions in the bank. "My advice is to set goals, work towards them and take advantage of any chances that come your way."

Banking may be changing but there are still benefits, according to Caroline Andrews, communications officer at Barclays. "You can move round the country and learn transferable skills. And salaries are competitive because the banks want to be competitive."

Barclays Bank, general recruitment, tel: 0845 300 0546; graduate recruitment is via the web:

www.barclays.com

The Chartered Institute of Bankers, tel: 01227 762600, fax: 01227 763788.

Employers' Forum on Disability, tel: 020 7403 3020, www.employers-forum.co.uk

HSBC, graduate recruitment, tel: 0114 252 9750, general recruitment, tel: 0114 252 9212 (quote DN), website: www.hsbc.co.uk

UNIFI (formerly BIFU), tel: 020 8946 9151, fax: 020 8879 7916.

A safe pair of Hands

Guy Hands, managing director of the principle finance group of Japanese bank Nomura, is one of the most influential people in the City of London and is widely known as the man who almost bought the Millennium Dome.

Guy (right), 41, who has dyslexia, spent six years at a school for dyslexic pupils in Bath. He went on to gain two A levels "based on an interview plus logic papers" and an Oxford degree in politics, philosophy and economics.

"When I did my finals," Guy remembers, "I had to dictate the answers – the tutors wouldn't read my papers because the spelling and writing was so bad."

Guy joined Goldman Sachs investment bank straight out of university in 1982, on a starting salary of £23,000.

"I never told the bank I was dyslexic," he says. "I applied for a sales job, but they decided to make me a trader, which was just as well as I didn't need to write. When I was about 30 I went into structured finance, which involved reading and writing. But I was established then and could come out of the closet as a dyslexic."

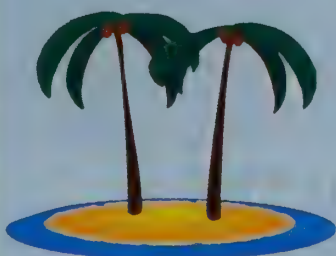
Guy believes that a banking career is feasible for people with dyslexia. "It's not a bad industry to go for. There's a lot of use of computers, which helps, and a lot of opportunity to use numeric skills and spoken skills such as client relationship building."

Guy supports a number of dyslexia charities. "I would like to see banks and other organisations be more open-minded about who they hire," he says. "It's very easy for employers to look at qualifications, but written skills are only part of it."



Disability Now's comprehensive holiday coverage begins in the January 2001 issue.

So, if you want 66,000 readers to see what your company can offer, or the benefits of staying in your accommodation, call Richard or Patrick now!



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Patrick, tel: 020 7619 7320

fax: 020 7619 7331

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Christmas is coming...

Anne Davies checks out this year's offering of festive cakes, puddings and biscuits

Almost everyone likes to get their teeth into a traditional cake at the festive season. But people with special dietary requirements might need something a bit out of the ordinary.

If you have a gluten or wheat allergy, dairy products upset your system or you just fancy something a bit different from standard Christmas fare, there are plenty of options from mail-order firms and some of the big supermarket chains.

Supermarkets have many good own-brand traditional cakes, like Tesco's "finest" matured puddings, laced with fruit, brandy and rum (907g, £7.75). Tel: 0800 505555.

Oxfam Fairtrade are selling a good organic festive pudding (right) and cake, available in most of their shops and by mail



order (cake £9.95, pudding £5.95). For a catalogue, tel: 01392 429428.

If gluten and dairy-free delights are the order of the day, try Lifestyle, which has puddings (400g, £4.50) and mincemeat slices (£2.20 for three). Minimum order six items, tel: 01491 570000 or visit www.glutenfree.co.uk

Try also the Village Bakery, tel: 01768 881515, website: www.village-bakery.com, or Dietary Specialities, tel: 07041 544044, website: www.glutenfree-dsdirect.co.uk

If cake's not your thing, why not give Tesco's chocolate and vanilla ice cream yule log a go (below right) (£2.99). Or you could try their equally tempting red fruit charlotte (right), made of sponge, vanilla mousse, raspberries and

Win!

It's a piece of cake!

We have lots of delicious puddings and biscuits to give away. Turn to page 47.

strawberries (£4.99).

Marks and Spencer has some delicious desserts on offer. Passion fruit roulade is made of soft, chewy meringue, filled with refreshing passion fruit cream and sauce (£3.99). Their chocolate truffle gateau – rich chocolate truffle on a crisp meringue base topped with chocolate flakes – is naughty but very nice (£1.99). Tel: 020 7268 1234.



Make your own gluten-free Xmas pud

50g/2oz raisins
50g/2oz sultanas
50g/2oz currants
25g/1oz mixed peel
25g/1oz ready-to-eat prunes
25g/1oz ready-to-eat dried apricots
25g/1oz ready-to-eat dates
100g/4oz chopped apple
½ teaspoon ground ginger
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

25g/1oz vegetable or meat suet
25g/1oz flaked almonds
50g/2oz gram or chickpea flour
50g/2oz rice flour
2 eggs
75ml/3fl oz brandy or orange juice or combination of the two
50ml/2fl oz milk
1. Mix fruit with spices, suet and almonds.
2. Add gram or chickpea flour

to the fruit mixture.
3. Add rice flour.
4. Beat eggs with liquids and stir into mixture.
5. Spoon into large, greased pudding basin, covered with greaseproof paper.
6. Put the basin into a deep pan; pour in hot water to halfway up the bowl.
7. Cover the pan lightly.

8. Bring to the boil, then simmer for four to five hours.
9. Check periodically that the water is still halfway up the bowl.

Recipe by kind permission of Michelle Berriedale Johnson, cookery writer and expert in food allergies.

Why not indulge yourself with some continental biscuits for a change? There are lots on offer – and Tesco's finest Swiss chocolate biscuit assortment (£3.49) is very good value.

From Bahlsen come the traditional Lebkuchen, a 500g box of mixed spicy cakes and biscuits (£2.49). They also have Zum Fest, a festive-looking box of mixed biscuits (£5.49).

Or how do you fancy Capucine meringue biscuits with chocolate crème filling on a milk chocolate base from Bahlsen's Swiss range – very moreish (£1.69 per box). Try also Amandine from the Swiss range – delicate heart-shaped crumbly biscuits layered with almond cream and half-coated in Swiss milk chocolate (100g, £1.49). Tel: 01753 889822.



The Duchy Originals range has some excellent organic biscuits, made from the finest ingredients and full of flavour (£5.95 per tin). Available in most good supermarkets and delicatessens.

Finally, Thorntons is offering a selection of diabetic chocolates (425g, £8). Tel: 0870 160 1911 or visit the website at www.thorntons.co.uk

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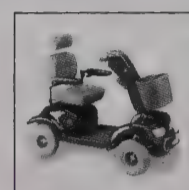
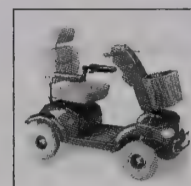
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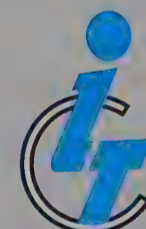
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Dear Ann

Who better to help you? Ann Darnbrough, who is disabled herself, is co-author of the Directory for Disabled People and other guides. Write to her at Disability Now, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW or e-mail editor@disabilitynow.org.uk

Mortgage dilemma

A friend of mine is having difficulties getting a mortgage. She is the owner of a home which is becoming dilapidated through neglect. She has calculated that she could afford to remortgage her house and has approached building societies and banks. Each time she has been turned down because the source of her income is disability benefits.

She has been advised by the Disability Rights Commission to write to at least one of the mortgage companies to get details of their policies and she has done so.

Have any other readers had similar problems and, if so, how did they overcome them?

Gillian, Devon

This is a difficult problem because mortgage companies will not usually accept state benefits as guarantees against loans. Am I right in assuming that your friend's original mortgage company is not prepared to accept the higher loan a remortgage would involve? Is this perhaps because her cir-

cumstances have changed or that the new amount required could not be offset against a sale of the property?

It would be worth consulting your local Citizens Advice Bureau which could, if necessary, recommend a solicitor. It is usually possible to get a half hour's legal advice free of charge.

.....

Women's problems

I am writing to voice my disgust at the discrimination that is aimed at people who have female-only disabilities.

I feel that the entire system has been geared up against me and others in my position.

After a long fight I got Disability Living Allowance (DLA), but it looks as though this is in jeopardy, together with my regular benefit. Other people I know of who have different types of disabilities (especially men) have been able to obtain benefits and services easily, even though they are

■ love and loneliness

■ bereavement

■ personal problems

■ advice and support

nowhere near as disabled as I am.

This discrimination against women should be addressed.

Jackie, London

I cannot be specific about your concerns because you do not say what your disabilities are. What I can say is that it seems that many disabled people (both men and women) are being deprived of state benefits and this is causing considerable hardship. I do hope you are able to keep your DLA.

I recommend that you join up with other disabled people to campaign for fairness in the provision of benefits. The British Council of Disabled People has local groups and would be glad to hear from you. The disability movement has made big strides forward in having the needs of disabled people brought to the Government's attention, as well as to the attention of the general public.

You may also like to consider contacting Margaret Hodge, the Minister for

He's no good for you

I feel so miserable. Because I am disabled I thought I would never find a boyfriend. Then this gorgeous hunk came along and I was so happy. I thought he loved me. I tried so hard to please him. He is still with me, but he treats me badly and has beaten me up. He always says he is sorry afterwards and because I want to believe him I always forgive him. What can I do? I don't want to be on my own.

Gina, Tewkesbury

You know what you should do: leave him. He's a loser and he's no good for you. Worst of all, he's destroying your self-confidence. Don't waste any more time on this guy. There are plenty of others out there – yes, really.

Remember: every time you find yourself wondering what a boyfriend feels about you – if he likes you, if he loves you – try instead to ask yourself how *you* feel about *him*. That's what really counts and that's what will help you to detect a rotten, violent apple. You'll know when the right man turns up.

I think you need to focus on yourself for a while. Find things that you can get passionate about rather than being obsessive about your boyfriend. You'll find that you no longer mind being on your own and, while you're developing your own interests, you might meet someone more suitable.

Disabled People, about the particular needs of disabled women.

.....

Yawning problem

I have been yawning a lot recently, despite the fact that I sleep eight hours a night and exercise regularly. I am in my forties. Do you have any suggestions?

Mary, London

We yawn to inject oxygen into our bloodstream. You may have

been breathing inefficiently and therefore your blood is low on oxygen.

It is important to ensure that you get good quality sleep. To do this it is important to cut out night-time alcohol and to avoid working in the evenings. Try also to have a good wind-down routine.

You may have sleep apnoea, which is associated with snoring and disturbed sleep. It could be worth talking to your GP, who may refer you to a specialised sleep clinic.

British Council of Disabled People, Litchurch Plaza, Litchurch Lane, Derby DE24 8AA, tel: 01332 295551.

Margaret Hodge MP, Minister for Disabled People, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

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Wyld Court Rainforest is a subsidiary of The Living Rainforest. The aim of this not-for-profit charity is to help people to discover exotic plants growing in a warm, wild jungle environment, together with an exciting variety of small animals, reptiles, fish and butterflies. It is an exciting introduction to the incredible diversity of rainforest life.

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Website: www.worldlandtrust.org



OFFERING A UNIQUE SERVICE



DN's telephone counsellor Lin Berwick can give disabled people and carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Disabled herself, Lin is a psycho-therapeutic counsellor and Methodist local preacher, and she has a postgraduate diploma in homeopathic medicine. If you have something you need to discuss in confidence, talk to her on Mondays 6pm-10pm and Thursdays 1pm-5pm, tel: 01787 882111.

Awards

The Lady Allen of Hurtwood Memorial Trust is inviting applications for its annual awards, by 15 January 2001. Made to people working with children, the awards enable them to travel at home or abroad, enlarge their experience and enhance the quality of their work. Applications welcomed from people working with disadvantaged or disabled children. Details and forms from Caroline Richards, 89 Thurleigh Road, London SW12 8TY.

Information

The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) has published three new *Your Benefit* guides for pensioners, people of working age and young people. They give clear information on entitlement and claiming. All are £2 and are available in large print, Braille and on tape. The RNIB also has the free leaflet *Money for Pensioners with Sight Problems*. RNIB customer services, tel: 0845 702 3153, minicom: 0845 758 5691, e-mail: cservices@rnib.org.uk

build The British Institute of Learning Disabilities has produced a free, easy-to-read leaflet *Getting Involved in Policy Making*, aimed at helping people with learning disabilities to play a part in making decisions about services and support. Tel: 01562 850251, fax: 01562 851970.

Regional

Gateshead Council has published *Breakfree*, a new information pack about access to the countryside in the borough, including Derwent Walk Country Park and Derwenthaugh Park. It lists details of gradients, gates, steps and surface quality. £1.50 (cheque payable to Thornley Woodlands Centre), to Breakfree Guide, Thornley Woodlands Centre, Derwent Walk Country Park, Rowlands Gill, Gateshead NE39 1AU.

The National Trust has installed a new access system for disabled visitors at Petworth House, West Sussex. Giving access to the restaurant, it blends into the house's historic surroundings. The steps quickly convert into a lift, which once used, is recessed into the floor again for step access. Petworth House, tel: 01798 342207, fax: 01798 342963.

What's on

SCOPE will hold its fourth National Conference, *Equal Voices*, 3 November, London. Key speakers, including landmine campaigner Chris Moon and special adviser to the Disability Rights Commission Caroline Gooding, will discuss the human rights of disabled people, including the right to life, sexuality and access to the legal system. Full details, tel: 020 7619 7373, fax: 020 7619 7380.

Disability Alliance will hold its *AGM and Conference*, 6 November, London. It will look at the current economic position of disabled people of working age, how this has changed and the impact of future government policy. £15 members, £25 non-members, details from Disability Alliance, Universal House, 88-94 Wentworth Street, London E1 7SA, tel: 020 7247 8776.

The Birth Defects Foundation (BDF) will hold the *Noonan Syndrome Information Day*, 11 November, Manchester. This is a chance to meet professionals and discuss with other families the various conditions, as well as the BDF's ongoing research. Full details, tel: 0870 077 7768 (national rate), fax: 01543 462344.

The Socialist Health Association (SHA), Medical Practitioners Union and the NHS Consultants Association will hold *Democracy and Accountability in the New NHS*, 18 November, London. It will include the work of the Council Scrutiny Committees and democratic local involvement balanced against national imperatives. Full details and cost from SHA, 22 Blair Road, Manchester M16 8NS, tel: 0161 286 1926.

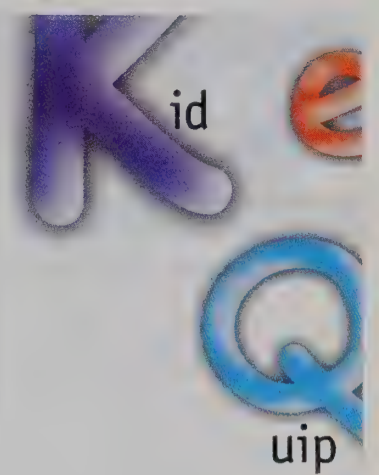
Something for the kids

If you need equipment for a disabled child or information as a parent or carer, Kid-e-Quip Bolton is the place to go.

The free show will be held 8-9 November, Reebok Stadium, Bolton. There will be loads of dedicated children's equipment manufacturers and retailers there, so you can try out, browse or quiz exhibitors to your heart's content.

New launches include the Moti Activ three-wheel wheelchair from JCM Seating Solutions (see advert on page 22, DN October). Aimed at children aged 18 months to eight years, it can be used over rough terrain as well as in the street.

The Stairlite Express mobile stair climber from Baronmead International will also be launched. It can be dismantled into three pieces for transportation, and has clamping points for fixing in a vehicle.



A fashion show will be held at intervals, with disabled models wearing clothes from the Tesco children's autumn/winter collection.

There will also be a drama workshop by Andrew Phillis (ex-Brookside), gymnastics displays and a Kirton sensory tent. Round-table discussions will enable parents to discuss issues that concern them, from continence to policy making.

For advance free tickets and details, tel: 01282 455528, fax: 01282 451608. Come and visit DN on stand 75.

Get set, cook! at Rehab & Care 2000

Cooking fans – don't miss *Rehab & Care 2000*, one of the Independent Living events, being held at NEC Birmingham, 29-30 November.

The show will include *Get set, cook!*, where interactive cookery demonstrations will be given by celebrity chefs including Jean Lewis, hotel chef for 18 years, Sue Heaton, an

occupational therapist and regular cookery demonstrator, and Chris Moon, landmine and charity campaigner.

The free shows will be in an adapted work area from Versatility Kitchens, with features such as the Versatility Activator which adjusts the height of work surfaces at the

touch of a button – even those with a hob or sink, and safety features including ovens with side-hinged doors.

Get set, cook!, the national competition, was organised in association with Disability Now, offering disabled people the chance to show what culinary masterpieces

they could create – recipes had to be healthy, value for money, take less than 45 mins to create, and be ideal for today's busy lifestyle.

Visit DN on stand 61. For advance free tickets, tel: 0870 751 1437, e-mail: pippa.williams@ebc.emap.com or visit: www.independentlivingevents.co.uk



Bringing the community together

Retaining independence and dignity greatly enhance one's quality of life.

PUTS YOU ...

For all of us, privacy when using the toilet is of primary concern. The Mountway Solo Toilet Lift is a new concept - slimline and battery-operated, it is both neat and discreet. Specially designed to lift you on and off the toilet, it blends into its surroundings, causing no embarrassment.

MOUNTWAY
Solo
TOILET LIFT



mountway
living independence to life

01495 718000

... IN CONTROL

- Ⓢ Discreet
- Ⓢ Stylish & Modern
- Ⓢ Hygienic
- Ⓢ Easy to use
- Ⓢ Simple to install
- Ⓢ Lifts a person up to 25 stone
- Ⓢ Value for money



special introductory offer

DN lineage

tel: 020 7619 7320, fax: 020 7619 7331,
minicom: 020 7619 7332,
e-mail: patrick.durham_matthews@scope.org.uk

• Personal

ATTRACTIVE, DISABLED LADY, 68. Wltn a lady or gent who is able to offer help and companionship on day out. Willing to share petrol cost on all outings. Preferably n/s with a love of seaside resorts. Cheshire area or Gwent. Box No.

CARING GUY, MID 40's, looking for lady to share my adventurous lifestyle. You: petite, mobile, n/s, artistic, intelligent, carnivore with gsh. Box No.

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING? Dunno quite what? If you're nice to me I'll love you a lot. See how desperate I am! 42, fun, disabled lady with lots to offer. Drop me a line to find out. Box No.

DECENT, SINGLE CHAP, 46, with muscular dystrophy, slim and young looking, likes quiet homelife. Seeks slimish, homely lady, 25-40 for friendship. Bexley/Kent area. Box No.

GRADUATE FEMALE, LATE 20s, w/chair user. Enjoys theatre, cinema, pubs and sailing. Wltn caring male with gsh for fun, friendship and maybe more. Photo appreciated. Box No.

ACTIVE, MONOPAEDIC PENSIONER and black dog, wltn a home-loving lady. Disabled person with gsh welcome. Share new bungalow in North Powys. Box No.

• Wanted

FLAT EXCHANGE WANTED. Wheelchair adapted 2-bed flat in nice part of Wandsworth, for 1- or 2-bed ground-floor flat in Westminster area. Tel: 020 7228 0096 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm).

LIGHTWEIGHT FOLDING w/chair for slim adult. Solid rubber tyres, must be adjustable to fit average car boot. Tel: 020 8349 9913.

• Cars/vans

DRIVE-FROM WHEELCHAIR

1998 Transit Tourneo GLX, auto, 13k miles. Adapted for disabled driver with extremely limited strength and reach.

Can be easily adapted to suit any disability. Adaptations include Steering Developments joystick, steering, electric gas and dual braking system, power door and lift, plus much more. Progression of impairment forces sale. Unmarked and as new. Bargain at only £29,950 ovno. Tel: 020 8391 4294.

FIAT FIORINO 1.7, diesel, R reg, 1,400 miles, converted for w/chair. £6,500. Tel: 01475 632879.

CARAVELLE GL8 2.4D, auto. Refinements and air conditioning, electric hand brake, swivel front seats, tinted glass, rear ramp. Seats 7 and 1 w/chair or 5 and 2 w/chairs. New Dec 97. 26k miles, fsh, warranty till Dec 2001, recovery until Aug 2001. Limoride with auto diesel economy. £16,500. Tel: 01462 625053.

CHAIRMAN SCUDO 1.9, diesel, 1997, low mileage, driver, w/chair plus 3 others. £9,999 ono. Tel: 01625 425501 (Cheshire).

FORD TRANSIT, N REG. Drive from w/chair, metallic green, N reg, alloy wheels, electric windows, air conditioning, stereo and CD. Electric tie down, accelerator/brake, gears, door and lift with remote control. Horizontal steering, fsh, good condition. £16,000 ono. Tel: 0115 978 4032 or 0778 511 5926.

CHAIRMAN CARGO VAN, 1996, low mileage, well maintained, pas, central locking, electric windows, rear access, lowered floor, single piece ramp, electric winch, rear heater. Seats 5 plus w/chair with securing system. £10,000 ono. Tel: 01788 823763.

RENAULT TRAFIC PRIMA, 1700cc, M reg, 46k miles. Rear w/chair ramp, seats 4 plus 2 w/chair passengers. 10 month's MOT, vgc. £4,200. Tel: 020 7511 8849 (day) 01923 247049 (evenings).

DRIVE FROM W/CHAIR Chrysler Voyager-type MPV. Automatic, many extras, auto ramp, vgc. £12,000 ono. Tel: 01299 851660.

ELAP SWIVEL CAR seat, in excellent condition. Full fitting instructions available. Cost £470 new, asking £250 ono. Tel: 01823 430324.

FORD TRANSIT, AUTO

adapted, 28k miles, L reg, 1 year's MOT, 1 owner. W/chair or able bodied driver, auto rear doors, Ricon w/chair lift plus further adaptations. £8,500 ono. Tel: 023 8078 3375 (Southampton).

FIAT FIORINO 1.7, N reg, 27k miles, diesel. Pas, immobiliser and winch. MOT Dec 2000. Vgc. £7,500 ono. Tel: 0161 429 9734.

NISSAN VERSA VANETTE 2.0, conversion, diesel, 42k miles, MOT. Rear ramp access. £2,500. Tel: 01584 877737 (Shropshire).

RENAULT TRAFIC, R REG, 1997, 7k miles, petrol. 1 or 2 w/chairs plus 4 passengers. Ramp and electric winch, alarmed. Almost new condition. £6,200 ono. Tel: 0151 220 7730 (Liverpool).

FORD GALAXY 1.9 TD, Brotherwood conversion, metallic blue, 1997, P reg, 16k miles. Manual, fsh, a/c, 59in highroof, ramped w/chair passenger vehicle. £14,950. Tel: 01630 652173.

• Wheelchairs/scooters

HUNTLEIGH ELECTRIC 4-WHEEL scooter. New batteries, little used, immaculate. Can deliver. £875. Tel: 01763 208355 (Cambridge).

TGA WHEELCHAIR power pack, excellent condition. Comes with carry case. £400 ono. Tel: 020 8868 2841.

QUICKIE 2 ELECTRIC/manual w/chair. Powertec F16, 3 year's intermittent use. £3,200 new, offers please. Tel: 01789 763447.

CARONY IN-CAR wheelchair, only used 4 times. Suitable for 2- or 4-door car. £3,000. Tel: 01424 423575.

SIT-EASY SPRUNG w/chair seat. Unused. £40. Tel: 0151 428 0007.

SUNRISE 4-WHEEL electric chair, charger, kerb climber. £580. Tel: 01908 676471.

TELESCOPIC PORTABLE RAMPS. Cost £300, will accept £50. Tel: 0141 885 1016.

BEC HORIZON 4-WHEEL folding electric w/chair. Joystick, variable speed, kerb climber, charger, vgc. £500 ono. Tel: 01733 750231 (Peterborough).

POWERCHAIR WITH RAMPS, tilting Recaro seat, battery charger. Cost £7,000, accept £2,500. Tel: 01929 471097.

• Household/family

TERRY HARMONY LIFT, through-floor lift installed, second hand in Dec '99. Can be seen working. £2,500. Tel: 01424 423575.

ADJUSTAMATIC ELECTRIC BED, head/foot rest, elevation and vibro massage. £250. Tel: 01630 652173.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1. Antic 4. Sarcasm 8. Stairlift 9. Ask 10. Sakharov 11. Zero 13. Tell-tale 16. Clone 18. Tee off 20. Endurance test 21. Serpent 22. Totem
DOWN: 1. Assist 2. Track record 3. Curtain 4. Spinoza 5. Rota 6. Aware 7. Makeover 12. Reverent 14. Offbeat 15. Access 17. Eerie 18. Tenet 19. Atom

TOP OF RANGE Orthopaedic bed. Posturematic Eureka, 3ft. Latex body form mattress. 6-fold adjustable movement. As new, 4 year's warranty. Cost £3,400. Accept £1,500 ono. Tel: 0114 247533 (Sheffield).

PORTABLE BATH BUBBLE, as new with instructions and 5 year guarantee. £500 no. Tel: 01323 738336.

ADJUSTABLE BED, DUAL action, 5ft: two 2ft 6in mattresses with separate control. £3,400 new, used 1 week only. £1,750 or reasonable offer. Tel: 0121 459 7771.

• Computing

WINDBAG SOFTWARE, NEW, £50. Tel: 01926 854292.

Due to lack of space, there is no lineage form in this issue. If you want to sell an item, or place a personal advert, please see a previous issue or contact Patrick, tel: 020 7619 7320, minicom: 020 7619 7332

• For sale

COTSWOLD COTS

Build Cots and Beds for Adults and Children with Special Needs

We Design And Build Any Cot or Bed You Need.

New Products Extra Strong Playpens, Extra Large Stairgates, Fitted Padded Play Areas. High Quality Fair prices Information Phone 01993 842885

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES BOUGHT AND SOLD

Selection of 20-25 mostly one owner low mileage vehicles in stock from £3,000 - £15,000.

For full dealer facilities contact Graham Clarke

01634 243596

Powerchairs Mobility Consultants

New and Nearly New, Electric Wheelchairs, 3 and 4 Wheel Scooters.

All models wanted and for sale.

Ring Free anytime

0800 074 6834

All major credit cards accepted

• Holidays (continued on page 41)

ALGARVE - PORTUGAL

Lots of villas, farmhouses, bungalows, hotels, B&B, car hire with hand controls, adapted vans and plenty to see and do.

Contact: David Player Tel: 00 351 289 393636 Fax: 00 351 289 397448 E-mail: dave@player.pt

www.player.pt

Blagdon Farm Country Holidays Devon/Cornwall border

Superb, south-facing, wheelchair accessible luxury bungalows overlooking lake and set within 38 acres of glorious countryside. Many on-site facilities including indoor heated pool. Take-away meals delivered and equipment loan available. Tourist Board Highly Commended.

For colour brochure please contact: Pauline and Tony Blight, Blagdon Farm, Ashwater, Beaworthy, Devon EX21 5DF. Phone: 01409 211509. Fax 01409 211510.

Accessible Vehicle Register

We specialise in locating used vehicles to suit the specific needs of our customers. If you are looking for an accessible vehicle or have one to dispose of, contact Adam Price. We also supply and install all forms of access equipment.

01202 814112

adam.price@lineone.net

CAREFREE HOLIDAYS: SPAIN - COSTA ALMERIA

Does the idea of winter sunshine appeal to you? Read on! Wheelchair accessible accommodation overlooking the Med'. Minibus for transfers and excursions. Good home cooking and FREE wine with meals. Personal care available.

A totally relaxing holiday.

For brochure call 020 8205 6778

e-mail: bartlamcarefree@worldonline.fr

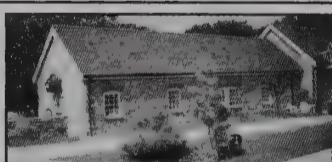
GAER COTTAGES

"HOLIDAY CARE AWARD WINNERS"

Quality self-catering cottages for ALL the family with an emphasis on facilities for disabled visitors. 6 of the 9 traditional Welsh stone cottages are single storey, easily accessible from the car park. Luxurious indoor heated swimming pool with hoist. Games room. Open ALL YEAR.

Visit us at www.selfcateringinnwales.co.uk or ring for a 2000 brochure

RICHARD & LINDA BURGESS
01570 470275



5 Star self catering cottages on animal park in North Wales. Fully wheelchair accessible with all services for disabled people, 2 miles from the beach. Three quarters hour drive from Snowdonia National Park. 01407 711433.

FREEDOM OF THE GLEN HOTELS

Choose from 3 hotels in spectacular lochside settings near Fort William. Enjoy the freedom to select the hotel which sets the right atmosphere for your break. A choice of 10 rooms with disabled facilities, around the loch.

E-mail: reservations@freedomglen.co.uk Tel: 01855 8215821, Fax: 01855 821463

www.freedomglen.co.uk

Birkdale Clinic: my practice has a relaxed and tranquil atmosphere. The aim of the treatment, which comes about as a result of co-operation between myself, as the therapist, and the patients, is to empower, encourage and motivate the person to regain their confidence and awareness of their body. Call Mrs Bondarenko, Tel: 020 8998 9403

Norfolk, Nar Valley Holiday Cottages

3 self-catering, all wheelchair accessible, 1 with wheel-in shower room, 2 with airbaths. Mostly en-suite. On working farm - peaceful location, central for beaches and tourist attractions. Indoor heated swimming pool now being built.

More details and prices, contact: Rosemary on 01760 338797.

PENROSE BURDEN NORTH CORNWALL "Holiday Care Award Winners"

Holiday Cottages designed for wheelchair users and their families. Rural setting with superb views. Dogs welcome. Wood burning stoves and daily meal service.

Please ring or write for colour brochure.

R&N Hall, Penrose Burden, St Breward, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 4LZ. Telephone Bodmin (01208) 850277 or 850617

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE HOLIDAY COTTAGE IN RURAL FRANCE

Charming cottage in Dordogne region available for rent. Reasonable rates. If you are looking for peace and quiet, warm weather, good food and wine, this is the place for you. Book now for 2000. Call or fax Ed Passant on 0208 885 4971 or e-mail: ed.passant@mail.com

Brittany Cottage to let. Fully adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6.

Details C. Hodgson.

Tel (01924) 499220.

WYE VALLEY Specialising in Holidays for Disabled People

Glorious valley & river views, 3 acre gardens 3 lounges & conservatory. T.V./Radio all rooms. Menu choices. Physio, hairdresser.

MINIBUS OUTINGS TO TINTERN, SYMOND YAT ETC. - TAKES WHEELCHAIRS - CAN ALSO COLLECT/RETURN TO YOUR HOME.

Xmas entertainment programme. Rates from £250 per week. (01594) 530855 for brochure etc.

The Priory Res. Home, nr Tintern NP5 4TL

The Algarve, Portugal

Small hotel owned and run by English family. Home from home. Happy and friendly. Home cooked food. Diets catered for. All bedrooms en-suite. Our own swimming pool and grass bowling green. Golfing bookings can be made. We are fully equipped for wheelchair users, their families and friends. Met at Faro airport. For brochures and flights with A.T.O.L. agents, tel: 01235 521804

Cleethorpes Accessible holiday chalet, fully adapted, 3 bedrooms.

Children/pets welcome. Sleeps up to 8. All inclusive from £295 per week. Few weeks left this season. Book now for 2001. For details Tel: 01472 210323 or 0795 102 1227.

Classified deadlines for the December issue:

Bookings: 10 November

Copy: 14 November

• Services

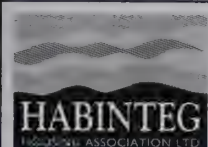
Payday Services Limited

Payday Services provides payroll services for voluntary and non-profit making organisations, home carers, charities (no VAT) and SMEs.

We do everything necessary for you to pay your employees correctly. Fees from £98pa (incl VAT)

The Studio, Benefield Road, Brigstock NN14 3ES
Tel: 01536 373111 Fax: 01536 373123

• Recruitment (on pages 41 to 46)



HABINTEG
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD
Universal Housing
Solutions for the
Whole Community

Habinteg is a registered social landlord with 2000 quality homes in 50 estates throughout England. Three-quarters of our stock is general needs accommodation built to Mobility or Lifetime Homes Standards and one-quarter is wheelchair users homes integrated throughout our schemes.

We provide inclusive and accessible housing for all members of the community.

There is an opportunity for people sympathetic to our aims to make a real contribution to our continued success.

Habinteg has a Board and four Functional Committees each meeting four times per year mainly in London: Finance and Resources, Operations, Marketing and Development, and Audit. We are seeking people to further strengthen these Committees with either private or public sector experience and general business skills including human resources (preferably with experience in employment law), marketing and IT. Specific professional or academic knowledge of one or more of the following would be advantageous: Finance, legal, housing/property development, maintenance and management.

**Voluntary
Committee
Members**

We particularly welcome interest from women, people with experience of disability or from black and minority ethnic communities. The positions are unpaid but travelling and accommodation expenses will be paid. Successful applicants will be asked to attend two or three other association meetings or functions during the year.

For information and a pack please contact: Kate Van Orden, Assistant Company Secretary or Anne Reilly at **Habinteg Housing Association**, One Pemberton Row, Fetter Lane, London EC4A 3PQ, telephone: 020 7822 8700, or e-mail: kvanorden@habinteg.org.uk.

CONTACT Peer Support service run by and for disabled people requires a

Disabled Development Worker
Salary £19,101 (35 hours)

CONTACT provides a confidential one to one peer support service across the Bradford District promoting a social approach to disability. You will be responsible for the day to day running of the organisation and will need experience in all of the following areas:

- working under the direction of disabled people
- fund-raising, financial management and organisational development
- disability issues, legislation and equal opportunities
- making training, information and services accessible using current technology

For an application pack write to **CONTACT** 17-21 Chapel St., Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD1 5DT. Remember to state what format you require standard print, large print, audio cassette or Braille.

Closing date: 5pm, 17 Nov 2000
Interviews: 30 Nov and 1 Dec 2000

BMCNews

Overnight Translators

Freelance overnight translators required to provide English summaries of European press articles. Working from home from 3am to 8am, Monday to Friday (with a degree of flexibility), you will need perfect written English and knowledge of at least one other major European language. Internet access also required.

Please send CVs to Aileen Kelly, bmcnews, 89% Worship Street, London, EC2A 2BF, e-mail: aileen.kelly@bmc.co.uk.

Disability Now is not responsible for claims made in the advertisements it prints and all readers are advised to check claims with the advertisers before relying on them.

Develop transport projects that will shape London's future

Victoria

Transport for London is the new organisation established to implement the Mayor's transport plans for the capital.

A wide range of bold initiatives - including major new rail projects, a programme for improving interchanges and new light rail schemes - are to be developed by our Integration Department from planning and approval stages through to successful implementation.

It is here that we now have a number of excellent opportunities for professionals from a variety of disciplines with a broad spectrum of experience. People who will relish the prospect of making a real and positive difference to London's future.

Principal Transport Planners/ Project Managers - c£37,000 Ref: TfL29/DN

These senior posts are tailor-made for people with a proven track record in developing, evaluating and progressing at least one or more significant transport projects - and directing the work of staff and consultants in so doing.

Whether your experience has been gained in highway, freight, public, pedestrian or another transport area, you must add at least a second-class degree in a relevant discipline to high levels of expertise in project management, transport economics and project funding. Numerate and an excellent communicator, you will also have a strong grasp of the key transport issues facing London... and the enthusiasm to drive forward the solutions.

Senior Transport Planners c£30,000 Ref: TfL30/DN

One of these positions will focus specifically on transport demand forecasting; another on transport-related health and environmental issues. Others will be more general transport planning. Whichever role you undertake, however, you must possess a strong foundation of experience gained in developing or evaluating one or more transport projects, where you will have assisted in managing the work of junior staff and consultants. Numerate and a good communicator, probably with a minimum second-class degree in a relevant subject, you will now be actively enhancing your knowledge in economic and transport modelling.

Transport Planners - c£23,000 Ref: TfL31/DN

If you are looking to start a career in transport planning, this is your ideal first step. Equipped with either a first or second-class degree in an associated subject, you must be fully numerate with strong IT and report writing abilities.

Can you meet the challenge? If so, please send your up to date CV and a covering letter, quoting the correct reference, to: Rita Stares, TfL Human Resources, 15th Floor, Windsor House, 42-50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0TL, or email RitaStares@tfl.gov.uk

Closing date: 17 November 2000

Transport for London

Working towards equality

• Events

4 December 2000

International Day of Disabled People Advice, Education and Employment

Advice for employers and disabled people

From 1.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.

Newham Town Hall, Barking Road, East Ham, E6.

Event to include launch by:

Councillor Ted Sparrowhawk
Deputy Cabinet Member to Leader Best Value

Councillor Val Fone
Deputy Cabinet Member Adult Services

Francesca Martinez
Grange Hill/Comic

Gary O'Donnoghue
BBC Radio

Information and advice stalls

Seminars

Everyone welcome - no need to book

For further information please contact:
Ali Safdar Action and Rights 020 7473 9655
Carlen Finn First Line 020 7511 5001
Ray Ellul LBN 020 8430 3395
Frank Dethridge LBN 020 8430 3285

Newham

COUNCIL OF THE YEAR 2000

• Contracts and Tenders

Social Services Directorate

Contract for the Provision of an Advocacy Service.

Tenders are invited from providers to provide an advocacy service for people who have a physical disability, learning disability or sensory impairment. Providers must have a proven track record of offering advocacy services for these Client Groups.

Tender documentation is available by contacting Mrs Linda Delargy on 01202 458850 or fax 01202 458860, before 31 October 2000.

Tenders must be returned by 4pm on Friday 24 November 2000 to the address given in the tender document. Tenders submitted after this date and time will not be accepted.

If necessary interviews will be held for shortlisted providers.



ERIC FISHER
Director of Central Services

Bournemouth Borough Council

• Holidays (continued on p42)

NORTH CUMBRIA

Cosy/well equipped lakeside lodges (2 b'room).
Idyllic, peaceful & wonderful nature. Wheelchair friendly
lodge and walks around lake & private nature reserve.
Free use of wheely boat. Great fly fishing.

The Tranquil Otter
www.the-tranquil-otter.co.uk
01228 576661

LINDETH HOWE COUNTRY HOUSE HOTEL

Set in six acres of beautiful grounds overlooking Lake Windermere. Recently re-opened after major extension & redevelopment.
New colour brochure 015394 45759
email: lindethhowe@zencomp.net

• Personal

Handicate

Introduction Agency



For disabled and able-bodied people

Established 1987

Tel: 01473 226950

Fax: 01473 254030

E-mail: handicate@btinternet.com

Website: www.handicate.com

Freeport, Handicate, The Wellington Centre, 52 Chevallier Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2BR
A member of ABIA

• Conference

NATFHE The University & College Lecturers' Union is holding a one-day conference for disabled members on Saturday 25 November 2000 at NATFHE Head Office in London.

Only 50 places are available and these will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. The conference is free to NATFHE members and travel expenses will be paid.

For further information ring Tracie Coals at the Equal Rights Unit on:

tel: 020 7837 3636
e-mail: tcoals@natfhe.org.uk
minicom: 020 7278 0470

Senior Researcher

Keep the focus on quality with a forward-looking team

c.£31,000

London's mayor views transport as a key policy area in his administration and Transport for London is the new body charged with driving the development and delivery of services for the capital. Now we are searching for a high-calibre specialist to manage a wide range of research programmes in support of strategic planning and decision making.

Reporting to London Buses' Planning Research Manager, you will design, commission and run continuous and ad hoc research projects that include customer satisfaction surveys, mystery traveller and performance monitoring. There will be external consultancies and a significant budget to manage, as well as a challenging hands-on role, analysing and presenting research findings at strategic management level.

A firm grasp of quantitative/qualitative and statistical/sampling techniques will be essential and you should be a fluent presenter at senior level. Also required will be the ability to manage projects to strict standards, budgets and deadlines - and we envisage you will be a Graduate, with maybe five years' experience and a professional research qualification. You should, in addition, be a talented analyst with advanced MS Office, SPSS and Quanvert skills.

In return we can offer you an influential voice, within a business that is challenging, varied and always interesting. There are also good prospects and rewards waiting for the right candidate, so apply now - by sending your CV to: Antoinette Jones, Human Resources Assistant, London Buses, 172 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9TN or email to lsvacancies@tfl-buses.co.uk

Please quote reference LB036/E

Closing Date: 17th November 2000

Working towards equality



London
Buses

CJA

RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS GROUP

2 London Wall Buildings, London Wall, London EC2M 5UX

Tel: 020 7588 3588 / 3576 Fax: 020 7256 8501

E-mail: cja@cjagroup.com Website: www.cjagroup.com

High profile and challenging opportunity for a leader with vision, who is a strong manager and who can work effectively with the Executive Committee.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE - CHARITY

SOUTHERN HOME COUNTIES

£60,000 - c.£75,000 + CAR

A LEADING CHARITY PROVIDING INNOVATIVE SERVICES FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

Due to the forthcoming retirement of the Chief Executive, we invite applications from candidates, who must have had five years experience as a Chief Executive or functional director in an organisation with a turnover of about £10m. in Industry, Commerce or the Service sector. The aim of the charity is to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. The charity operates a number of centres to equip disabled people with the skills they need for more independent living. You will report to the Chairman of the Executive Committee and will be responsible for managing and leading this very successful charity into the future which will require a well developed empathy with people. You will direct, control, and develop the management team within the

strategic framework set by the Executive Committee, to achieve the objectives agreed with them. You will promote the charity's vision with decision makers and providers of funding both national and local. Key qualities are the ability to lead over 700 full/part-time staff and volunteers; to blend with warmth a strong commercial and financial approach with the charity's aspirations and opportunities; and to develop the pioneering and specialised services provided by the autonomous centres of the organisation. Initial salary negotiable £60,000 - c. £75,000 plus car and excellent benefits package. Our client is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from disabled people.



Applications in strict confidence under reference CE/11029/DN to the Managing Director, CJA Group, 2 London Wall Buildings, London EC2M 5UX. E-mail dmd@cjagroup.com fax 020 7256 8501 or telephone 020 7638 8987 for an initial confidential discussion

www.cjagroup.com

THE LIN BERWICK TRUST

Providing self-catering holiday accommodation for people with disabilities, their families and/or carers.

PART-TIME FUNDRAISING AND PUBLICITY CO-ORDINATOR

Salary: £20,000 p.a. pro rata for 21 hours per week (i.e. £12,000 p.a.)

Initially on a 1 year contract

Do you have good fundraising and communication skills? We are seeking someone with these qualities to join our rapidly growing charity. The Lin Berwick Trust was formed in 1989 by Lin Berwick who has cerebral palsy and is totally blind. We aim to give people with disabilities a real holiday choice in first rate accommodation. Our first cottage is in Norfolk. We are now fundraising to build our next much-needed property elsewhere in the UK. The successful candidate will:

- Have responsibility for grassroots fundraising and developing public awareness of our work
- Have the ability to manage their time effectively and present information both written and verbal
- Be expected to work from home and be prepared to travel occasionally within the UK
- Be in sympathy with the Christian ethos of the organisation
- Be directly responsible to Lin Berwick, our President
- Work closely with other members of the team

Interested? For further information, please contact the Trust Secretary, Sylvia Eden, 18 Green Willows, Lavenham, Suffolk CO10 9SP. Tel/fax/ansafone 01787-247032. e-mail: sylvia@edensuffolk.freemove.co.uk

Application is by curriculum vitae only.

Closing date for cv applications: 17th November 2000
Shortlisting will take place: 21st November 2000
Interviews will be held on: 29th November 2000

If you have not heard from us by 24th November, please assume that your application has been unsuccessful in this instance.

Registered Charity No. 803172. We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome application from all sectors of the community.

Disability Action North East

Require an **Information & Administration Worker** to join in the campaign for full and equal rights for disabled people.

Scale: S01, Hours: 35, Pay: £19,101.

D.A.N.E. is a regional campaigning organisation of disabled people. Current personal experience of disability, understanding of the social model of disability, and experience of databases and desktop publishing are essential.

This post is funded by The National Lottery Charities Board until January 2002.

For details and an application pack contact Denise Wood at DANE, Mea House, Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8XS. Telephone and textphone 0191 230 4111, fax 0191 230 4009. Please state which format you require, eg tape, large or standard print, Braille, computer disk.



Closing Date: Friday 24th November 2000.

Disability Arts in London (DAIL) Magazine is looking for a new EDITOR

DAIL is London's leading disability arts magazine. It is a monthly magazine, produced by the London Arts Forum, combining a leading edge mixture of disability arts news, views and reviews, as well as listings and advertisements.

The DAIL Editor needs to have:

- journalistic skills;
- capacity to work to tight deadlines;
- computer literacy;
- extensive knowledge of Disability Arts.

Salary: £17,100 (wage rise pending).

For an application form, please write to: London Disability Arts Forum, the Diorama Arts Centre, 34 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3ND. Please mark the envelope 'DAIL Editor post'.

Closing date for applications: 15 November 2000. Interview date to be confirmed. Applications from disabled people are particularly welcome. Jobshare applications will be accepted.



Southampton Centre for Independent Living (SCIL), an organisation run and controlled by disabled people, wish to recruit an enthusiastic person, committed to the empowerment of disabled people and making a real difference to disabled people's lives.

Consumer Audit Co-ordinator, 35 hours/wk, £19,101-£20,364

Consumer Audit is an innovative method of evaluating community care services from the viewpoint of the user or consumer. We believe that users of services are uniquely qualified to assess and inform commissioners to facilitate change. We are looking for a second Co-ordinator to join our established team, with skills in: marketing, promotion and evaluation, together with an ability to co-manage a team of auditors, deliver audits to budget, and liaise with commissioners and providers of services.

The post requires an ability to travel unaided or with assistance. You will have 25 days leave per year and a pension scheme.

SCIL is committed to equal opportunities. We particularly welcome applications from disabled people who are also members of minority groups. All posts are open to job share.

For application packs, or an informal chat, please contact SCIL:

Tel: 023 8033 0982, textphone: 023 8063 5167, fax: 023 8022 5060

e-mail: lan@southamptoncil.demon.co.uk

Application closing date is 24 November 2000. Previous applicants need not apply.

• Holidays

Near Salisbury - newly converted stable block self-catering units. Ground floor 1 double/twin bedroom en-suite wheel-in shower. Upstairs 1 double, 1 single, shower room. Open plan kitchen & living room. Patio & shared garden. ETB category 2, 4-star highly commended. Non-smoking. Prices from £195 pw. Available all year. Tel: 01722 349002. e-mail: mail@old-stables.co.uk, www.old-stables.co.uk

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Shaftesbury, Dorset. Award winning holiday cottages, cat 1, 2 and 3. Working family farm in beautiful countryside. "Best views in Dorset", tremendous character, log fires, C.H. old beams. Accessible swimming, some aids and support services available. Colour brochure. Mrs Sue Smart, Hartgrove Farm, Hartgrove, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 0JY, tel: 01747 811830, fax: 01747 811066, e-mail: cottages@hartgrovefarm.co.uk www.hartgrovefarm.co.uk

Newlands Country House, Reydon Southwold, Suffolk IP18 6NS
Purpose built grade 1 wheelchair accessible suites, 4 diamonds. All rooms en-suite, tv. Ample carparking, large garden. For details tel: 01502 722164, fax: 01502 724696 www.southwold.blythweb.co.uk/newlands

Learning and Skills Council for England (LSC)

The Learning and Skills Council for England (LSC) is a new Non-Departmental Public Body which becomes fully operational from April 2001. The LSC is responsible for meeting the needs of up to 6 million learners and a wide range of employers.

These posts offer unique opportunities to play a leading role in developing policies and programmes which will increase participation and improve the quality of post-16 learning provision.

Director of Learning Programmes

Salary: £75,000 - £90,000 per annum

The successful candidate will have a key role in driving forward the LSC's learning and skills agenda by developing strategies and implementing policies/programmes for both adults and young people.

Reporting directly to the Chief Executive, the successful candidate will have responsibility for designing, developing and delivering learning programmes which will ensure that post-16 funding is simpler, fairer and offers improved value for money.

Quote Ref: LSC11

Director of Operations

Salary: £75,000 - £90,000 per annum

The Learning and Skills Council will be a unitary organisation and have over 4,500 members of staff. Reporting directly to the Chief Executive, the successful candidate will embrace the challenge of setting up the LSC's network of 47 local arms (known as local Learning and Skills Councils).

The successful candidate will have the key responsibility for agreeing plans and allocating resources to the LSC network, and for managing its performance and delivery of agreed plans.

Quote Ref: LSC12

Director of Communications and Strategic Planning

Salary: £60,000 - £75,000 per annum

Reporting directly to the Chief Executive, the successful candidate will lead the external marketing and promotion of learning with a wide range of partners at senior level.

The Learning and Skills Council will have over 4,500 members of staff and the successful candidate will direct, manage and develop a strong central communications capability within the LSC.

Quote Ref: LSC13

Director of Provider Quality/Standards

Salary: £65,000 - £80,000 per annum

The successful candidate will be responsible for raising standards of education for learners and tackling social disadvantage by removing barriers to Post-16 initiatives. A key challenge of the post will be to introduce robust arrangements to tackle deep seated problems of inconsistency of standards by ensuring excellence which meets the needs of all adult and youth learners.

Working directly to the Chief Executive, the successful candidate will develop excellent working relationships with a wide range of partners in provider organisations at senior level.

Quote Ref: LSC14

Successful candidates will be appointed by the LSC. For an information pack and an application form, please visit our website at: www.dfes.gov.uk/post16/lscappointments; or write quoting the appropriate reference number to:

LSC Appointments Team, Learning and Skills Council and Partnership Division, DfEE, W3c, Moorfoot, Sheffield S1 4PQ; or e-mail: lsc.appointments@dfes.gov.uk

The closing date for applications is **3 November 2000**.

Applications are particularly welcomed from people with disabilities, members of ethnic minority groups and women.

THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IS COMMITTED TO MAKING APPOINTMENTS ON MERIT BY FAIR AND OPEN PROCESSES, TAKING ACCOUNT OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES.



Department for
Education and Employment

SOCIAL INCLUSION & HEALTH

Getting the Care Right for People in Need

PROGRAMME MANAGER (PHYSICAL & SENSORY IMPAIRMENT)

18.5 hours

Two years fixed term contract

£26,781 - £28,839 p.a. (pro rata)

Independent Living Centre, 100 Oldbury Road, Smethwick

We have embarked on an ambitious programme of modernisation and development of Physical and Sensory Impairment Services with some exciting projects such as:

- A new User Led Independent Living Centre
- The introduction of Direct Payments
- Restructuring of Day Services
- Purpose built respite facility
- New Personal Assistance Service.

You will take responsibility for managing and supporting some of these and other projects to completion.

You must have a thorough understanding of and commitment to the Social Model of Disability and have experience of:

- Working with disabled people
- Project Management
- Service planning and development.

You will be based in the Independent Living Centre offering a fully accessible environment for persons with a disability.

We particularly welcome applications from women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities as they are currently under-represented.

Application forms, quoting Ref: 617, are available from: Director of Inclusion and Health, Central Unit, Sandwell M.B.C., Lombard Street West, West Bromwich, West Midlands, B70 8EB or ring 0121 569 5486 (24 hour answering service). Internet: www.sandwell.gov.uk

Closing date: 3rd November, 2000.

C.V.'s will not be accepted, submitted alone or with an application form, except from disabled applicants.



Sandwell is committed to equality and is working towards a no smoking policy

Contracts Auditor

Champion the highest standards on London's buses

C.£23,500

London Buses is the organisation responsible for securing passenger transport services for the people of Greater London. We work closely with contracted operators and maintain stringent auditing and control procedures - ensuring a safe, reliable service for some 3.7 million customers each day.

As a member of our Contract Compliance team you will carry out wide-ranging operational, financial and service level reviews within bus companies. Tasks will include checking a wide range of operating procedures. Generating clear reports and recommendations will also be a key element of the role, as will advising managers and contractors.

You should have an analytical mind and investigative flair backed by at least 18 months' of operational experience, in a transport or accounting environment. An assertive yet diplomatic approach is important and you will be a fluent report-writer who can relate findings to the broader business picture. You must also be capable of working independently - at operators' sites across London.

In return we can offer you a varied role of considerable influence, with good prospects and an attractive salary package. To apply please write, enclosing CV, to Antoinette Jones, Human Resources Assistant, London Buses, 172 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9TN or by email to lvacancies@tfl.buses.co.uk. Please quote reference LB034/E.

Closing date: 15th November 2000.

Working towards equality



London
Buses

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Disability Rights Commission

A society where all disabled people can participate fully as equal citizens

With offices in London, Manchester, Cardiff and Edinburgh, the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) has a variety of challenging roles available for committed individuals who are passionate about eliminating discrimination and delivering a high quality service.

Head of Policy - Scotland

£27,913 - £42,565 **Edinburgh** **Ref: 23621/DN**

This is a key Senior Management Team post, with a high level of strategic responsibility. You'll:

- * Play the lead role in developing policy strategy for the DRC Scotland while also contributing to wider strategy development.
- * With overall management responsibility for the Policy Unit of the DRC Scotland, you'll carry out 'hands-on' policy development work, and contribute towards the formulation of key documents such as Codes of Practice.
- * As a member of the management team the Head of Policy will be required to represent the DRC Scotland at a range of events.

Parliamentary Officer - Scotland

Up to £30,921 **Edinburgh** **Ref: 23622/DN**

This challenging position will require you to focus primarily on the Scottish Parliament and the DRC Scotland.

- * The key task is to draft and implement parliamentary strategy in order to promote the work, policies and profile of the DRC.
- * It will be essential to work closely with colleagues, to keep them informed of relevant parliamentary developments
- * And ensure colleagues experience and expertise is fed into parliamentary work, as appropriate.

Research & Information Officer - Scotland

£15,477 - £30,921 **Edinburgh** **Ref: 23624/DN**

This post has a clear focus on research and information about disability issues in Scotland. Its aim is to ensure that the work of the DRC Scotland/ DRC is strengthened through the collection and collation of information relating to Scotland specific issues. You'll:

- * Proactively work to meet the information needs of colleagues, both within the DRC and externally.
- * Have responsibility for setting up and maintaining appropriate information/ library systems.
- * Contribute towards the overall promotion of the work of the DRC Scotland by producing research briefings, reports and fact sheets and responding to external enquiries, as appropriate.

Development Manager - Scotland

£15,477 - £30,921 **Edinburgh** **Ref: 23623/DN**

This diverse role involves:

- * Co-ordinating and implementing development strategies which enhance the work of the DRC in Scotland.
- * Extensive networking with disabled people and colleagues in public, private and voluntary sectors.
- * Specific emphasis on the development of strategies in Rural and Highlands/Island areas. The tasks include both strategy development and direct work.

Head of Legal Policy

Up to £42,565 **Manchester** **Ref: 23633/DN**

Ensuring the work of the Legal Services Team both informs and is informed by the DRCs overall strategic aims. You'll:

- * Shape the direction of legal policy by researching, analysing and evaluating the issues emerging from cases brought by, or on behalf of, the DRC.
- * Contribute to the legal dimension of DRC consultations, policy papers, procedural development and codes of practice.
- * Develop a collaborative expert network with stakeholders and partners from inside and outside the DRC.

This is a complex and demanding legal policy role, requiring at least 3 years' post qualification experience as either a solicitor or barrister, practical and interpersonal skills with expert theoretical knowledge.

Head of Legal Services Team**Up to £42,565 Manchester Ref: 23632/DN**

Responsible for leading the Legal Services Team and for overseeing the provision of legal services to internal and external clients, you'll:

- * Build, lead and enhance the expertise of the Legal Services Team.
- * Oversee the applications made for legal representation.
- * Manage projects and budgets on behalf of the Director of Legal Services.

With at least 5 years' post-qualification experience as either a barrister or solicitor in civil litigation, you'll require leadership and interpersonal skills, drive and determination.

Legal Secretary**£11,421 - £18,208 Manchester Ref: 23634/DN**

Providing effective administrative support to the staff within the Legal Department, you'll:

- * Handle telephone enquiries and information within and about the team.
- * Ensure team documents and records are systematically filed and maintained.
- * Type legal documentation in connection with tribunal and court proceedings.

You should have the ability to communicate in a clear, concise and logically structured manner in addition to excellent interpersonal and team working skills.

Parliamentary Officer**Up to £30,921 London Ref: 23629/DN**

The Parliamentary Officer will have a crucial role to play in ensuring that the DRC is able to put disability issues high on the agenda of parliamentarians and opinion-formers. The DRC is looking for an experienced Parliamentary Officer able to effectively monitor parliamentary business, and identify and maximise opportunities for the Commission to influence legislation and policy regarding the issues facing disabled people. Salary will be commensurate with experience and skills that we require.

- * You must be able to demonstrate a commitment to equality of opportunity for disabled people.
- * You will have a minimum of 2 years' experience in parliamentary/lobbying work at a senior level.
- * You will be able to demonstrate a firm understanding of the parliamentary process, including the ability to identify and facilitate opportunities for DRC to influence legislation and policy where they affect disabled people.
- * You will have the ability to communicate effectively including the ability to influence key players including Parliamentarians and civil servants at all levels.

Press Officers**£15,477 - £30,921 London Ref: 23637/DN**

- salary will be commensurate with experience

Raising the profile of a new organisation, you'll get disability issues talked about across the country. Raising our profile and issues, you'll:

- * Possess excellent communication skills and good media contacts.
- * Have knowledge of national, regional and specialist media.
- * Have experience of crisis management and be able to manage complex problems.

Possessing a minimum of 2 years' experience in a national press or PR office, a background in disability issues is desirable but enthusiasm to learn about and promote our work is essential.

Head of PR & Publications**Up to £42,565 Manchester Ref: 23638/DN**

Do you want to take a lead on communicating new rights and opportunities for disabled people to different audiences across Great Britain? And to build leading edge publishing and PR programmes in terms of disability access?

As an experienced public relations or publishing professional, you'll:

- * Manage a team covering print and on-line publishing, public relations campaigns, advertising, web site development and events.
- * Have an understanding of disability rights, excellent tactical and strategic ability and a track record of managing communications programmes.
- * Make a major contribution to the impact of the DRC.

Caseworker Level 2**Up to £22,775 Cardiff Ref: 23635/DN**

Assisting people who want to bring a case of disability discrimination, you'll:

- * Advise on complex cases, progressing requests and recommending methods of support.
- * Investigate cases, including collection of evidence and conduct face to face interviews.
- * Advise disabled people and representatives on complex and sensitive issues, draft questionnaires and Employment Tribunal documentation, prepare clear reports and succinct analyses.

Knowledgeable and experienced, your advice is invaluable as you provide in-depth analysis and prepare submissions/documentation for legal proceedings.

Disability Rights Commission

Casework Managers

Up to £30,921 Manchester Ref: 23625/DN

Responsible for around 8 caseworkers, you'll:

- * Support and advise team members, ensuring the high quality and technical content of documents.
- * Deal with a personal caseload of complex requests for assistance from the public.
- * Manage and allocate workflow to Caseworkers and carry out performance appraisals.

You'll need managerial experience, excellent analytical and problem solving skills and particularly good drafting abilities. Knowledge of equality/disability legislation and experience of preparing employment tribunal documentation is essential.

Closing date for this post only is 24th November 2000.

Purchasing Officer

Up to £30,921 Manchester Ref: 23630/DN

As a key member of our Manchester Directorate, you'll:

- * Support DRC managers on all purchasing matters.
- * Use specialised knowledge of purchasing law for publicly funded bodies.
- * Develop purchasing practice and procedures within the DRC financial framework.

You'll need CIPS or equivalent, experience of purchasing practice across a wide range of sectors including work on conciliation, research and general purchasing and good communication skills. This is a one year contract.

Practice Development Officers

Up to £30,921 Manchester Ref: 23628/DN

Working with employers, industry and service providers you'll bring about positive changes for disabled people. With experience of delivering change-based work gained in more than one sector, you'll:

- * Understand the Disability Discrimination Act and be committed to equality issues.
- * Possess experience of working on pan-disability issues and have excellent communication skills.
- * Be able to manage complex projects effectively, whilst working with initiative to solve problems creatively and effectively.

Educated to degree level or equivalent, you should be able to effectively manage complex projects and have substantial experience of achieving successful change in the public, private or non profit sectors.

Executive Assistant

Circa £24,500 London Ref: 23636/DN
Higher salaries may be available to exceptional candidates

As part of this challenging role, you'll:

- * Monitor the Strategy & Policy Directorate's budget.
- * Manage the Directorate's administration and diary.
- * Manage the Director's correspondence.

You'll possess experience of managing and supporting workloads of administrative staff, including training and

appraisals. You'll need good organisational and I.T. skills and a commitment to equal opportunities.

Receptionist

£8,700 - £13,437 Manchester Ref: 23631/DN

Friendly and welcoming, you'll:

- * Answer and correctly route calls, dealing with a range of enquiries.
- * Manage the booking of conference and meeting rooms.
- * Update and maintain a range of records.
- * Co-ordinate stationery orders.

You'll need switchboard experience and well developed interpersonal skills. The ability to provide a high quality service and an awareness of disability access and service issues are essential.

Information Officers

Up to £30,921 Stratford & Manchester Ref: 23626/DN (Stratford) or 23627/DN (Manchester)

Supporting operators at the DRC helpline, which provides quality advice and information, you'll offer a range of services including requests for literature to long and complex discussions about potential discrimination cases. Currently based in Stratford, some of this service may be relocated to Manchester within the next twelve months. We need two information officers, based in Stratford, but willing to travel on a frequent basis to Cardiff, Edinburgh, London and, primarily, Manchester. You'll:

- * Answer requests for information and advice about complex areas of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and other disability issues.
- * Assist with the maintenance and broadening of the resources needed to provide this service, whilst providing feedback to colleagues in other DRC offices.
- * Offer training to helpline operators, including updates on all relevant legislation, disability matters and internal DRC policies and practices.

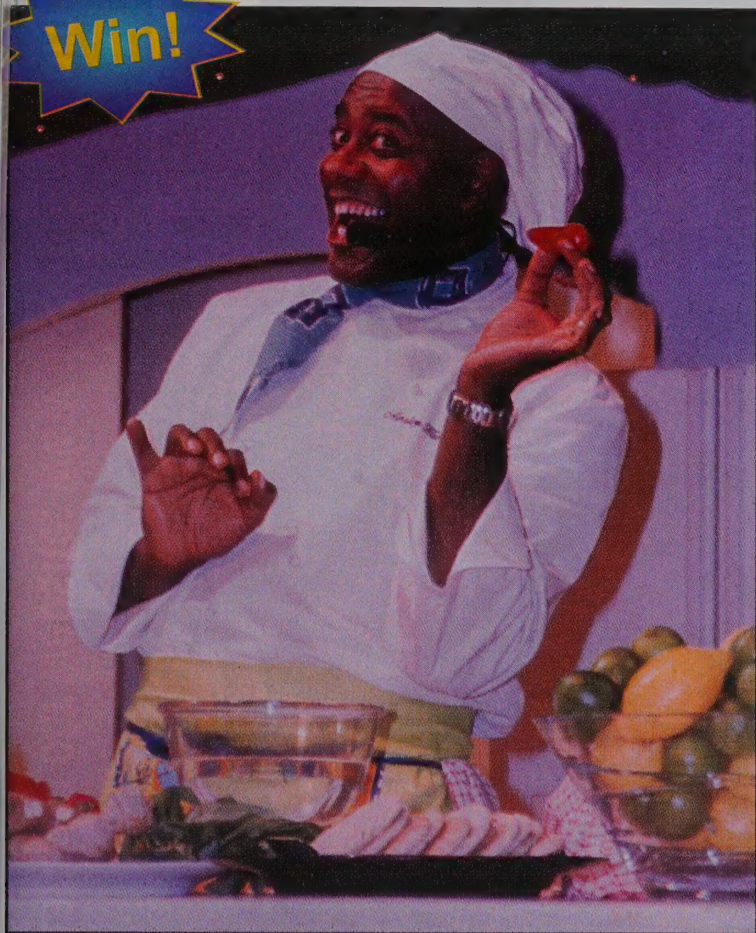
Preferably you'll possess first hand experience of disability and you will be able to demonstrate a proven track record of successful advice and information provision in a paid or voluntary role. Travel will be involved for all positions.

If you are interested in any of the above vacancies, please apply by calling 0800 068 4112, quoting the appropriate reference number. Alternative methods of application are available, to suit your needs (large print, braille, audio, electronic etc) - The HR Team will liaise directly with you should you require alternative formats. For minicom applications please call 0161 261 1702. You can request an application pack on-line at www.drc-gb.org or by e-mailing your contact details to drc@tmpw.co.uk

Closing date for the Caseworker Manager vacancy Ref: 23625 is 24th November 2000.

Closing date for all other positions is 1st December 2000. No applications will be accepted after this date.

Win!



With cookery receiving a lot of attention in DN at the moment, what better prize to win than free tickets to the *BBC Good Food Show*, run in association with the *Daily Express*, at Birmingham NEC,

29 November-3 December.

We have five pairs of tickets for 30 November, worth £30 a pair, to give to lucky winners. They include front row seats in a signed cookery demonstration by Ainsley Harriott (above) in

Visit a feast of cooking

the Supertheatre.

Over 400 exhibitors, including supermarkets, specialist and organic producers, and equipment manufacturers will be there to tempt the taste buds or inspire you.

Italy is the country of focus this year, so expect plenty of hearty, healthy eating ideas, as well as good oils and pasta.

Why not try wine tasting by pre-booking a session with Oz Clarke and Robert Joseph in the Vinopolis Wine Theatre? Want to perfect your favourite dish? Then book into a Question & Answer session with Jamie Oliver or Gary Rhodes.

And, as it will only be three weeks away, there's even a County Christmas Fair with street traders to get you in the seasonal mood.

All-in-all, you'll find everything you need to turn your beans on toast into the perfect roast.



TO ENTER

Tick your chosen competition circle(s) below, add your details, and send FOR FREE to *Disability Now*, Freeport WD4323, London N7 9BR, or you can fax it on 020 7619 7331, or e-mail the details to editor@disabilitynow.org.uk

☐ Cooking show ☐ MFPA
Puddings: ☐ any, or my preference:

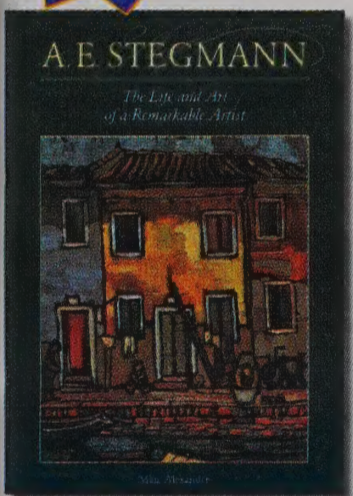


TERMS & CONDITIONS

- Cooking show offer closes: 22.11.2000, other offers close: 30.11.2000 • Entrants must be over 18
- No proof of purchase required • UK entrants only
- No cash alternatives • Winners notified by post • Editor's decision is final
- Special offers not open to DN staff or associates • Winners may be announced in DN • This is a joint partnership with the BBC, Bahlsen, St Michaels and VP Ltd, and we may use your name and address for further marketing purposes. Please tick the box if you do not wish your name and address to be included ☐

Win!

Book of delights



The Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists (MFPA), with over 500 members in 60 countries, was established by the mouth painter Erich Stegmann. And DN has six copies of *AE Stegmann - The Life and Art of a Remarkable Artist*, to give away, worth £14.50 each.

The book chronicles his life, from losing the use of his arms due to polio as a child, through his imprisonment in Germany for painting "social comments" against the state, to his setting up of the MFPA painting cooperative in 1956, in which he remained involved until his death in 1984.



This beautiful book is fully illustrated with photographs of Stegmann at work, as well as many of his paintings, from remarkable copies of Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* and Tizian's *The Tribute Money*, to stark oils painted during the war and watercolours of Africa and the Mediterranean.

The six lucky winners will also get an MFPA *Calendar 2001*, worth £4, illustrated by various members of the Association.

For details on the MFPA contact VP Ltd, 121 Oxford Gardens, London, W10 6NE, tel: 020 8964 0260, fax: 0208 964 0277, e-mail: vp@vp-pr.com

Win!

More food, glorious food

If the cookery page (page 34) has your tastebuds tingling - this is for you!

We have 10 Zum Fest (left) and 10 Amandine (left) biscuit boxes to give away, as well as three frozen St Michaels Passionfruit Roulade (right), three frozen St Michaels Chocolate Layer Gateau (right), and three frozen St Michaels Tarte Aux Fruits Rouges (not shown).

Just fill in the entry form.



DN next month

Xmas cards



Pack of 5 Christmas Tree cards only £1.50 (inc. p&p).

Send cheque, payable to Disability Now, to Xmas Card Orders, Disability Now, Freeport WD4323, London N7 9BR.

All the best news, views, jobs and offers. On sale 25 November.

IT'S CHRISTMAS

Toys, gifts, food and fashion to make you feel festive

PARALYMPIC PRIZES

Who won, who lost - DN has the stories and the pictures.

KID-E-QUIP

What's new in children's equipment? DN reports on the exhibition.

ME & MY TWINS

Nick Hutton on now we are one.

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Toyota Hiace Cruiser

Slyfish, comfortable and flexible are just some of the words used to describe the Toyota Hiace Cruiser GX wheelchair accessible vehicle from The Lewis Reed Group. Standard layout caters for four seated passengers and one wheelchair travelling passenger but the roomy interior can adequately take up to three wheelchair passengers or nine seated passengers.

£15,375

2.4 diesel GX
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Disability Now

£1.80 November 2000

The campaigning newspaper that puts you in the picture



Paralym-pics

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Gene meanie

Insurance industry gets genetic test go ahead

Road raves
Birmingham Motor Show



Jobs

p41-46 and on our website: www.disabilitynow.org.uk